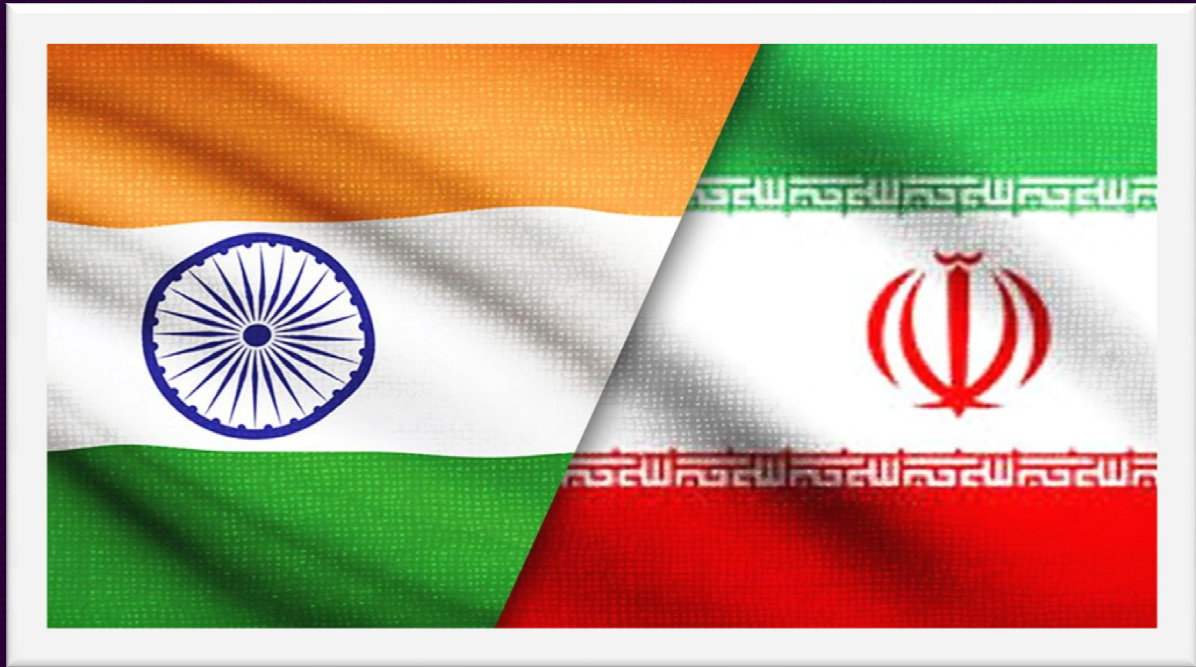


# INDIA (BHARAT) - IRAN (PERSIA)

## AND ARYANS

### PART - 2



#### Dr. Gaurav A. Vyas

This book contains the rich History of India (Bharat) and Iran (Persia) Empire. There was a time when India and Iran was one land.

This book is written by collecting information from various sources available on the internet.

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## 19. Latin America were of Indian racial stock :

Latin America Were of Indian Racial Stock: Gene D. Matlock; Genetic Studies Confirm Hindu Origins



Many of us may not be familiar with Gene D. Matlock, who is best known for his books on his views of the history of religion. Xpeditions Magazine in a 2007 edition quotes him terming it as 'non-Africanoid races'. According to him, India once ruled the entire world and that the American Indians were immigrants from India. Many tribes had been here only a few hundred years before the arrival of the Europeans. Gene D. Matlock has delved on the history of humans and religion in several of his books, namely What Strange Mystery Unites the Turkish Nations, India, Catholicism, and Mexico?, Jesus and Moses Are Buried in India, Birthplace of Abraham and the Hebrews, India Once Ruled the Americas!

View zone Magazine has published a series of articles by Gene D. Matlock on the aforementioned topics. In Matlock's words from this magazine, "One of the greatest mistakes a human being can make is to read the Hindu holy books...as fiction. Of course, those books, especially the Vedas, contain apparently implausible information..."

According to a recent article report published by dailymail.co.uk, researchers from Archaeology and Anthropology of Brown University made a fascinating discovery of an ancient Mayan 'megalopolis' hidden beneath thick jungle foliage in Guatemala. Scientists used Lidar technology to probe the dense jungle foliage to accurately map out the structures hidden beneath. The team of archaeologists surveyed over 2,100 sq km of the Peten jungle which borders Mexico and Belize and found some 60,000 structures during a period of two years of research. Daily Mail defines lidar as 'a remote sensing technology that measures distance by shooting a laser at a target and analyzing the light that is reflected back. It uses ultraviolet, visible, or near infrared light to image objects and can be used with a wide range of targets, including non-metallic objects, rocks, rain, chemical compounds, aerosols, clouds and even single molecules.'



The Lidar technique helped scientists map outlines of what they described as ‘dozens of newly discovered Maya cities hidden under thick jungle foliage centuries after they were abandoned by their original inhabitants.’ Images captured using this technology show raised highways that linked together urban centers and quarries including advanced irrigation and terracing systems. Images reveal agriculture was one of the most advanced to arise in Mesoamerica.

Ancient Mayan civilization discovered through lidar technology; Source: dailymail.co.uk



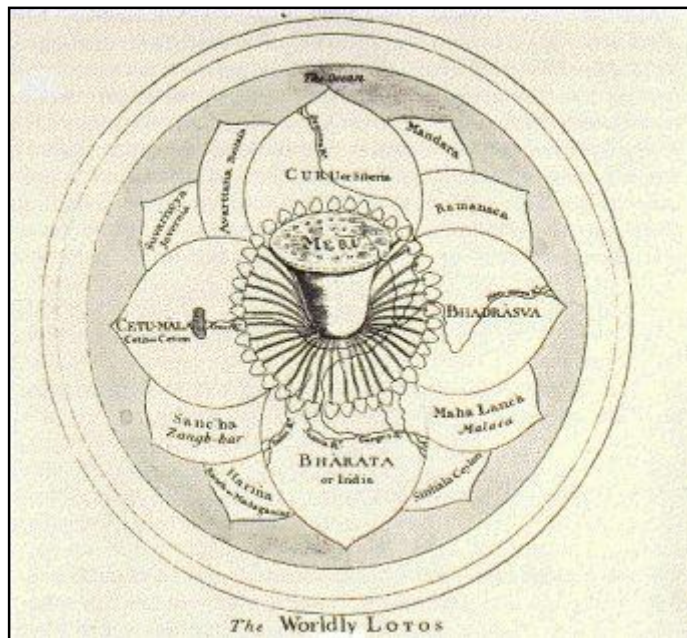
Daily Mail quoted, ‘The earliest Maya settlements were constructed around 1,000 B.C., and most major Maya cities collapsed by 900 A.D. The civilization reached its height in what is present-day southern Mexico, Guatemala, and parts of Belize, El Salvador and Honduras between 250 and 950 AD. The ancient Maya civilization was one of the most advanced to arise in Mesoamerica. It was marked by sophisticated mathematics and engineering that allowed it to spread throughout present-day Central America and southern Mexico.’

The Vedas is a treasure house of information on the existence of the universe and mankind of ancient times. In the opinion of Gene D. Matlock, the Vedas tell us about Patala or “The Underworld” which the ancient Hindus called Meso-America. They mention the flight of Garuda (the eagle) taking the Nagas (snakes) there in its beak. The Ramayana tells us why Kubera dumped incorrigible tribes there. It tells us some implausible stories as well, such as the story about Kubera keeping his head under water for ten thousand years. In reality it is telling us that the Kuberas were not a single person but a Phoenician (Middle Eastern Puni and Indian Pani), a mariner caste who plied the seas for that amount of time. When a ship sailing out to sea disappears into the horizon, it looks as if it is sinking under water.

Gene D. Matlock further wrote, “The legends and myths of the Meso-Americans support the Vedas in this respect. As I have previously stated, the image on the Mexican flag of an eagle with a snake in its beak commemorates the arrival of the Nagas in Meso-America. But yet, we are always somewhat skeptical of such myths. How can we convince ourselves? We can be totally confident that India and the Kurus or Turks discovered America if we’ll quit thinking that Mt. Meru is a ‘mystical mountain’ but just mankind’s first world map”

So, going by Matlock's research on Meso-Americans, who were originally from India, the above mentioned recent discovery of Maya settlements in Gautemala suggests that these ancient civilizations were from India.

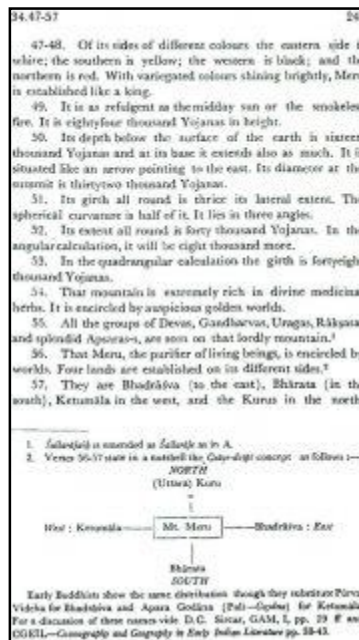
The Sanskrit Dictionary lists Ketumala or Chetumala as one of the nine divisions of the western portion of the known world. Matlock confirms India's claim as the discoverer and settler of the Western Hemisphere is as solid as the rock of Gibraltar.



**Worldly Lotus Source: [viewzone.com](http://viewzone.com)**

Gene D. Matlock wrote in View zone Magazine, "One day, I decided to examine the map of Meso-America in order to find out whether a Chetumala or Ketumala existed there. It did not take me long to find out that Chetumal is even now a safe port in what is now Belize, Central America. At first, I was satisfied that I had found the depicted in the picture of Mt. Meru. But the skeptics let me know that this Chetumala might be just a coincidence. After looking at all the pictures of Mt. Meru I could find, I discovered that next to Chetumal was a body of water called Kashyapa Sea. One of the meanings of Kashyapa is "sea turtle; tortoise." I then investigated to find out whether there are significant turtle populations in the Caribbean area and off the coast of South America. I found out that more sea turtles of different species inhabit Meso-America and Eastern South America than any other place in the world."





### Mt. Meru Source: Exotic India Art

According to Matlock, forefathers of the Carib Indians state were Kuru-Rumani. Carib appears to derive from that of the Kaurava clan of Kuruksetra. 'Belize' is a composite Sanskrit word: Bala = "facing the east; rising sun." Belize does face the east. The second syllable appears to derive from "Isha or Isa" (God Shiv). Therefore, Belize = "The Rising Sun of Shiv."

The Sanskrit word 'Patal' means "one of the seven regions under the earth and the abode of serpents." Matlock opined, "That word still exists in most, but not all, of the Mayan-derived dialects along Mexico's northern east coast down to and including the Central American nations. It means 'abandoned or deserted land; without people'. The Mayan lowlands are called Nacaste. Nacaste appears to be a compound word originally derived from Sanskrit: 'Naga-asta' (Land of the Western Nagas).

As per Gene D. Matlock, the country of Lanka sank under the sea in approximately 2500 B.C. he wrote, "There is abundant evidence that the Ramas and the Lankans colonized Patala, (Mexico) just as the Ramayana states, for many Ceylonese or Lankan names, referring to deities, places, and people, are found there. Southern Mexico Bristles With Hindu and Ceylonese (Lankan) Names."

Likewise Gene D. Matlock has drawn a wealth of Sanskrit references from the Vedas, and Indian epics and scriptures besides independent study of civilizations to justify his points. Were the newly discovered Maya cities fall in line with Matlock's justification?



**Gene D. Matlock Source: theorionzone.com**

Source :

<https://www.myindiamyglory.com/2018/02/13/latin-america-indian-racial-stock-gene-d-matlock-hindu-origins/?fbclid=IwAROXdl-BLTYcHhmpOoid5N3GXMhGArns4XBiFazn2qDK5WAKZ3gGAaEPetc>

## 20. King Dahir :

Raja Dahar (Sanskrit: राजा दाहिर) (Sindhi: راجا ڈاهر)

*Rājā Dāhir*; 663 – 712 CE) was the last Hindu ruler of the Brahmin Dynasty of Sindh (present-day Pakistan). In 711 CE, his kingdom was conquered by the Ummayyad Caliphate led by General Muhammad bin Qasim. He was killed at the Battle of Aror at the banks of the Indus River, near modern-day Nawabshah.

### Reign in the *Chach Nama* :

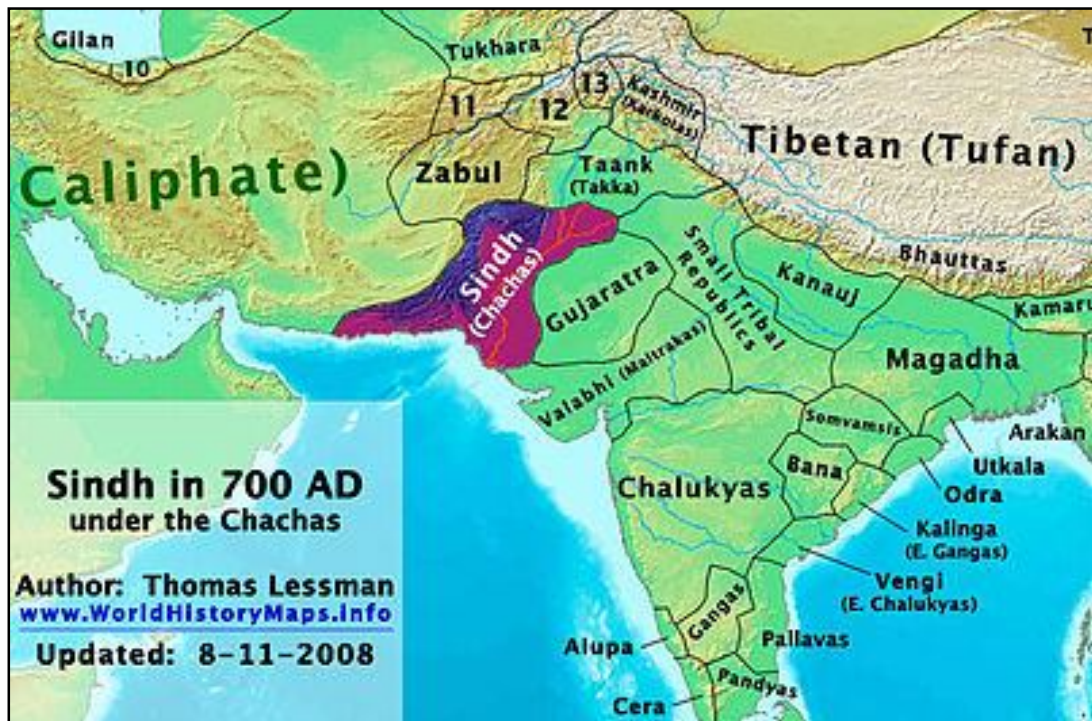
The *Chach Nama* is the oldest chronicles of the Arab conquest of Sindh. It was translated in Persian by an Arab Muhammad Ali bin Hamid bin Abu Bakr Kufi in 1216 CE from an earlier Arabic text believed to have been written by the Thaqafi family (relatives of Mukhtar al-Thaqafi).

Dahir's kingdom was invaded by King Ramal of Kannauj.

### War with the Umayyads :

"I am going to meet the Arabs in the open battle, and fight them as best as I can. If I crush them, my kingdom will then be put on a firm footing. But if I am killed honourably, the event will be recorded in the books of Arabia and India, and will be talked about by great men. It will be heard by other kings in the world, and it will be said that Raja Dahir of Sindh sacrificed his precious life for the sake of his country, in fighting with the enemy."

The primary reason cited in the *Chach Nama* for the expedition by the governor of Basra, Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, against Raja Dahir, was a pirate raid off the coast of Debal resulting in gifts to the caliph from the king of Serendib (modern Sri Lanka) being stolen. Meds (a tribe of Scythians living in Sindh) also known as Bawarij had pirated upon Sassanid shipping in the past, from the mouth of the Tigris to the Sri Lankan coast, in their bawarij and now were able to prey on Arab shipping from their bases at Kutch, Debal and Kathiawar.



Sindh in 700 CE, under the Raja's dynasty. The Umayyad Caliphate can be seen advancing upon the western frontier of the Indian subcontinent.

Hajaj's next campaign was launched under the aegis of Muhammad bin Qasim. In 711 bin Qasim attacked at Debal and, on orders of Al-Hajjaj, freed the earlier captives and prisoners from the previous (failed) campaign. Other than this instance, the policy was generally one of enlisting and co-opting support from defectors and defeated lords and forces. From Debal Hajaj moved on to Nerun for supplies; the city's Buddhist governor had acknowledged it as a tributary of the Caliphate after the first campaign, and capitulated to the second. Qasim's armies then captured Siwistan (Sehwan) received allegiance from several tribal chiefs and secured the surrounding regions. His combined forces captured the fort at Sisam, and secured the region west of the Indus River.

By enlisting the support of local tribes Meds, Bhuttos, and Buddhist rulers of Nerun, Bajhra, Kaka Kolak and Siwistan as infantry to his predominantly-mounted army, Muhammad bin Qasim defeated Dahir and captured his eastern territories for the Umayyad Caliphate.

Sometime before the final battle, Dahar's vizier approached him and suggested that Dahar should take refuge with one of the friendly kings of India. "You should say to them, 'I am a wall between you and the Arab army. If I fall, nothing will stop your destruction at their hands.'" If that wasn't acceptable to Dahar, said the vizier, then he should at least send away his family to some safe point in India. Dahar refused to do either. "I cannot send away my family to security while the families of my thakurs and nobles remain here."

Dahir then tried to prevent Qasim from crossing the Indus River, moving his forces to its eastern banks. Eventually, however, Qasim crossed and defeated forces at Jitor led by Jaisiah (Dahir's son). Qasim fought Dahir at Raor (near modern Nawabshah) in 712, killing him. After Dahar was killed in the Battle of Aror on the banks of the River Indus, his head was cut off from his body and sent to Hajjaj bin Yousuf.

## Women from Chachnama :

The Chachnama narrates a tale in which Qasim's demise is attributed to the daughters of King Dahir who had been taken captive during the campaign. Upon capture they had been sent on as presents to the Khalifa for his harem in the capital Baghdad (however Baghdad wasn't built yet and the actual capital was Damascus). The account relates that they then tricked the caliph into believing that Muhammad bin Qasim had violated them before sending them on and as a result of this subterfuge, Muhammad bin Qasim was wrapped and stitched in oxen hides, and returned to Syria, which resulted in his death en route from suffocation. This narrative attributes their motive for this subterfuge to securing vengeance for their father's death. Upon discovering this subterfuge, the Khalifa is recorded to have been filled with remorse and ordered the sisters buried alive in a wall.

## Source :

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raja\\_Dahir](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raja_Dahir)

## **21. Raja Dahir vs Muhammad bin Qasim :**

We first need to understand the entire history of Sindh in a timeline. The Rai Dynasty and Chach Dynasty are intricately connected to one another and should be discussed. This timeline also should tell you that Raja Dahir was not the first ruler of Sindh. He was just a handful of rulers spread over a period of 3000 years.

## Timeline of Sindh :

Early Harappan Period c. 3300 – c. 2600 BCE

Mature Harappan Period c. 2600 – c. 1900 BCE

Late Harappan Period c. 1900 – c. 1500 BCE

Vedic Sindhu Kingdom c. 1500 – c. 500 BCE

Sattagydia (Persian Achaemenid Empire) c. 516 – c. 330 BCE

Ror Dynasty, c. 489 – c. 450 BCE

Gedrosia (Macedonian Empire) c. 323 – c. 312 BCE

Mauryan Empire, c. 322 – c. 200 BCE

Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, c. 190 – c. 140 BCE

Indo-Greek Kingdom, c. 170 – c. 50 BCE

Indo-Scythian Kingdom, c. 110 BCE – c. 95 CE



Indo-Parthian Kingdom, c. 25 – c. 80 CE

Kushan Empire, c. 60 – 345 CE

Makuran (Sasanian Empire), c. 250 – 655 CE

- Rai Dynasty, c. 415 – 644 CE
- Chach (Brahman) Dynasty c. 641 - 725 CE

Umayyad Caliphate c. 670 - 860 CE

Habbari Dynasty c. 841 - 1024 CE

Samma Dynasty c. 1351 - 1524 CE

Arghun Dynasty c. 1520 - 1554 CE

Tarkhan Dynasty c. 1554 - 1591 CE

Thatta Subah (Mughal Empire) c. 1627 - c. 1707 CE

Kalhora Dynasty c. 1701 - c. 1783 CE

Talpur Dynasty c. 1783 - c. 1843 CE

Sind (British Raj) c. 1843 - c. 1947 CE

Sindh (Pakistan) c. 1947 - present

#### Rai Dynasty :

The Rai Dynasty was a Buddhist kingdom that ruled Sindh from 524 to 632 AD (CE). This was the first Sindhi kingdom to be established in over 800 years – the last being the Ror dynasty. Their rise to power came at a time of shifting political scenes in the Indus Valley, with the wane of Sassanian influence in the wake of the Hephthalite (White Hun) invasions. During this period, five emperors would rise to power, who were said to be great patrons of Buddhism.

#### They included :

Rai Diwa

Rai Sahiras

Rai Sahasi

Rai Sahiras II – died battling the King of Nimroz

Rai Sahasi II – died of unknown illness

The influence of the Rai's extended from Kashmir in the north, Makran and Debal (Karachi) in the south and the Kandahar, Sulaiman, Ferdan and Kikanan hills in the west. Buddhism was the main religion of this dynasty and of the Indus Valley for over 500 years up until this point, while Hinduism was a minority. The Battle of Rasil in 644 played a crucial role in their decline, which resulted in the Makran coast being annexed by the Rashidun Caliphate. The chronicle of Chach Nama describes the final demise of the Rai dynasty and the ascent of Chach of Alor to the throne. Chach, a Brahmin Hindu, rose to a position of influence under Rai Sahiras II and reportedly may have served as a "Vice Minister" of the dynasty. When Rai Sahasi II died, Suhandi (widow of the Rai) confided to Chach that the throne would pass to other relatives of the dying King in absence of any direct heir to the kingdom – and hence Rana Maharath, the king of Chittor and younger brother of Rai Sahasi II, would be next in line. However, unbeknownst to all, both Suhandi and Chach were supposedly "secret lovers". Suhandi had declared her love for the Chach years earlier, but the Chach refused to betray Rai Sahasi II as long as he was alive. They consequently kept secret the news of the king's death until claimants to the throne were killed. Following the purge, Chach declared himself ruler of Sindh and later married Suhandi. This ended the Rai Dynasty and thus began the Chach (Brahman) Dynasty in 632 AD.

#### Brahman (Chach) Dynasty :

Rana Maharath , who was not present during the purge, challenged Chach's claim to the throne in 640 AD. According to Chach Nama, Maharath, seeing that his army was making little headway, devised a sly strategy of challenging Chach to a one-on-one duel. Maharath took advantage of the fact that as a trained warrior and would naturally have a decisive advantage over Chach, who was a court administrator with very little combat training. Chach, knowing he could not refuse a duel without appearing weak, realized that he could only win by tricking Maharath. Chach claimed that he could not fight on horseback as he was not a trained horseman and suggested that they both fight on foot. Maharath readily agreed knowing that he would have the overwhelming advantage at close quarters. The two dismounted to engage in a duel, but Chach remounted upon his horse and killed Maharath by chopping his head off with a sword. With Maharath now out of the picture, Chach was in complete control of Sindh,

#### Public Perception of Chach :

Not much is known about how Chach was viewed by the general population; however, it is known that several regions in the dynasty attempted to secede following the rise of Chach to the throne. The Chach was a Brahmin Hindu, yet the majority of the populations were Buddhists, which may have played a part in the distrust. Furthermore, the purge of loyal followers of Rai Sahasi II and the killing of his brother, did not help matters further for the Chach, who was increasingly viewed as a tyrant, rather than a King.

#### Secession Threats :

Chach viewed the threat of secession as an insult and enlisted the help of his brother Chandar. He launched a campaign against the revolting autonomous regions along the River Beas in Punjab at Iskandah and Sikkah. It was a decisive victory for the Chach - 5000 men were killed,

while the remainder became prisoners of war, of which a significant number of these captives would be enslaved. After his victory, he appointed a Thakur to govern from Multan, and used his army to settle boundary disputes in Kashmir. Chach also conquered Siwistan, but allowed its chief, Mutta, to remain as its king.

#### Dynasty Expansion :

From Brahmanabad, Chach invaded Sassanid territory through the town of Armanbelah, marching from Turan to Kandahar. He exacted tributes from the latter before returning. Chach died in 671, and his brother Chandar took the throne until 679 temporarily, while Dahir was being groomed. In 679, Dahir (son of Chach) took the throne.

Chach (632 – 671 AD )

Chandar (671 – 679 AD )

Dahir (679 – 712 AD – from Alor)

#### Declining Law & Order :

During this transition period from Chach to Dahir, law and order in the dynasty appears to have eroded away. This had several consequences both domestically and internationally by 680 AD. Domestically, the peripheral territories, which Chach had captured, were again threatening to secede and made the dynasty vulnerable to attack from foreign powers.

#### Piracy in the Arabian Sea :

Internationally, piracy was becoming huge issue. Pirated raids off the coast of Debal (Karachi) resulted in gifts to the Umayyad caliph from the king of Serendib (Sri Lanka) being stolen. The coast of Sindh has always been a major shipping route (and still is today). The Meds, a tribe of Scythians living in Sindh, had pirated earlier upon Sassanid shipping in the past, from the mouth of the Tigris to the Sri Lankan coast, and now were able to prey on Arab shipping from their bases at Kutch and Debal (Karachi) with ease. This led to Arabs putting Raja Dahir on "notice".

#### Muhammad Haris Allafi Betrayal :

During this same period, Muhammad Haris Allafi (possibly a general) had killed the governor of Makran, which at that time was under Umayyad control. Dahir allied himself with Muhammad Haris Allafi, and granted refuge to Allafi and his troops as they had become self-exiled from Makran. Coupled with the piracy occurring in the Arabian Sea and refuge to Allafi, the governor of Basra, Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, tasked an expedition to eliminate Raja Dahir, as he was becoming a nuisance to them.

#### Siharas of Kannauj Invasion :

Prior to the Arab invasion however, another invasion took place in 687 AD. The Siharas of Kannauj (King Ramal) of a Rajput dynasty based in the Ganges plain, attacked Raja Dahir for

reasons not fully understood. Some claim the Siharas of Kannauj was attempting to take control of valuable Indus territory, while others claim it was done to repel the declining law and order situation from spreading into Kannauj's territory. Regardless, Dahir was able to defend his territory – Dahir's army along with Muhammad Haris Allafi and his soldiers fought against the Siharas of Kannauj and repelled the invading forces.

### Muhammad bin Qasim :

Muhammad bin Qasim was an orphan and the governor of Basra, Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, was his paternal uncle and his teacher of warfare and governing. Muhammad bin Qasim was highly intelligent who at the age of 15 was considered by many to be one of his uncle's greatest assets. Hajjaj's complete trust in Muhammad's abilities as a general became even more apparent when he appointed the young man as the commander of the all-important invasion on Sindh.

### Invasion :

Caliph Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan granted a large army of 6000 troops, 3000 camels and a sea artillery of equal strength to the governor Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf for his invasion of Sindh. The argument for the invasion was not because Raja Dahir was a "Hindu" but rather the tyranny Raja Dahir was implementing around the region – the pirated raids of Arab sea merchants, the refuge of Muhammad Haris Allafi and the general resentment of Raja Dahir from the Buddhist majority in Sindh seemed to have tempted the Arabs to make a move as soon as possible. Seventeen-year-old Muhammad bin Qasim was put in charge as general of the campaign.

Muhammad bin Qasim, as mentioned, was intelligent, under understood that many within the Chach dynasty were not in favour of Raja Dahir – hence the policy was generally one of enlisting and co-opting support from defectors and defeated lords and forces.

In 711 AD, Muhammad bin Qasim marched upon Debal by way of Shiras via Makran. On orders of Hajjaj, he freed earlier captives and prisoners from the previous failed campaign against Raja Dahir. From Debal, his troops, along with freed prisoners and local tribes of Debal moved on to Nerun (near Hyderabad). The city's Buddhist governor supported the Caliphate's campaign against Raja Dahir and offered to support Muhammad bin Qasim's campaign to remove Dahir from power. Qasim's army and allied supporters and defectors then moved on to Siwistan (Sehwan), where again he was received warmly and received allegiances from several tribal chiefs. After securing the surrounding regions, Muhammad bin Qasim's combined forces captured the fort at Sisam, and secured the region west of the Indus River in Sindh.

Muhammad bin Qasim was very well aware of the need to enlist the support of local tribes, as the campaign would not be successful without them. With the Meds tribe and Buddhist rulers of Nerun, Bajhra, Kaka Kolak and Siwistan as infantry to his predominantly-mounted army.

Dahir then tried to prevent Qasim from crossing the Indus River to his eastern domain, moving his forces to its eastern banks. Muhammad Harris Alafi served in the capacity of a military advisor to Raja Dahir, but refused to take active part in the campaign against Muhammad bin Qasim. Eventually, however, Qasim crossed and defeated forces at Jitor led by Jaisiah (Dahir's son). Qasim fought Dahir at Raor (near modern day Nawabshah) in 712 AD, killing him. After

Dahar was killed in the Battle of Aror on the banks of the Indus River, his head was sent to Hajjaj bin Yousuf. Muhammad Harris Alafi was also captured, however, since he refused to take part in a campaign against Qasim, he would later secure a pardon from the Caliph.

### Post Raja Dahir :

Conflicting theories begin after the fall of Raja Dahir and this is where identity and religious politics really take off. Indian historian Upendra Thakur says that the Muslims persecuted Hindus after the fall of Raja Dahir. In a subsequent communication, Hajjaj ingeminated that all able-bodied men were to be killed, and that their underage sons and daughters were to be imprisoned and retained as hostages. Qasim obeyed, and on his arrival to Brahminabad killed between 6000 and 16,000 of the defending forces.

Thakur writes "When Muhammad Kasim invaded Sind in 711 AD, Hinduism had no resistance to offer to their fire and steel. The rosary could not be a match for the sword and the terms Love and Peace had no meaning to them. They carried fire and sword wherever they went and obliterated all that came their way. Muhammad triumphantly marched into the country, conquering Debal, Sehwan, Nerun, Brahmanadabad, Alor and Multan one after the other in quick succession, and in less than a year and a half, the far-flung Hindu kingdom was crushed, the great civilization fell back and Sind entered the darkest period of its history. There was a fearful outbreak of religious bigotry in several places and temples were wantonly desecrated. At Debal, the Nairun and Aror temples were demolished and converted into mosques. Resisters were put to death and women made captives. The Jizya was exacted with special care. Hindus were required to feed Muslim travelers for three days and three nights."

Other historians and archaeologists such as J E Lohuizen-de Leeuw offers another explanation.

He writes "In fact, we have clear evidence that the Arabs were very tolerant towards the Hindus during the rest of the campaign and throughout the time they ruled Sind...Of course that does not mean that no monuments were ever destroyed, for war always means a certain amount of damage to buildings but it does prove that there was no wanton and systematic destruction of each and every religious Center of the Hindus in Sindh"

### Conclusion :

The purpose of this post was not to blame one particular person or religion either, but rather to clear up misconceptions of both Raja Dahir and Muhammad bin Qasim. Both were brave leaders who fought valiantly.

Raja Dahir seems to have inherited a lot of trouble from his father Chach. Instead of learning from previous mistakes, he seemed to have learned from his father, and continued making mistakes. This not only alienated the Buddhist majority, but also caught the ire of Rajpur King Ramal of Kannauj and eventually the Arabs, which eventually led to his demise in 712 AD.

Muhammad bin Qasim's on the other hand is not this brave "Islamic hero" as he is being portrayed in Pakistan. His purpose of invading Sindh was not to "spread Islam" but rather protecting shipping routes used by Arab sea merchants and establishing a friendly regime in Sindh. The removal of Raja Dahir was seen necessary to fulfill these requirements.



War is a messy business, and tragedy is bound to strike. The battle between Raja Dahir and Muhammad bin Qasim was indeed no different. There is no doubt that following the fall of Raja Dahir, the Hindu minority may have been persecuted by not only the new Muslim rulers, but also the Buddhist majority. However, this is no different than what occurred following the fall of the Buddhist Rai dynasty of Sindh and the subsequent persecution of Buddhists (in particular the Jat tribe) from Raja Dahir and his Hindu minority. The sad fact is, this is how war was conducted back then...the victors usually suppressed and tormented the defeated. One could argue this still occurs today as well (ie. Treaty of Versailles).

Source :

<https://defence.pk/pdf/threads/raja-dahir-vs-muhammad-bin-qasim-the-true-story.558334/>

## **22. Alexander's failed invasion of India :**

It is acknowledged by Greek and Roman sources that the fierce and constant resistance put up by the Indian soldiers and ordinary people everywhere had shaken Alexander's army to the core. Nothing Alexander could say or do would spur his men to continue eastward. The army was close to mutiny.

Alexander's invasion of India is regarded as a huge Western victory against the disorganized East. But the largely Macedonian army may have suffered a fate worse than Napoleon in Russia.

In 326 BCE a formidable European army invaded India. Led by Alexander of Macedon it comprised battle hardened Macedonian soldiers, Greek cavalry, Balkan fighters and Persians allies. Estimates of the number of fighting men vary – from 41,000 according to Arrian to 120,000 as per the account of Quintus Curtius.

Their most memorable clash was at the Battle of Hydaspes (Jhelum) against Porus, the ruler of the Paurava kingdom of western Punjab. For more than 25 centuries it was believed that Alexander's forces had defeated the Indians. Greek and Roman accounts say the Indians were bested by the superior courage and stature of the Macedonians.

More than a thousand years after Alexander's death, the myth-making reached absurd and fantastic proportions with the arrival of a new genre known as the Greek Alexander Romance, a fictional account of Alexander's Asian campaigns composed of a conglomeration of the rumors surrounding his rule. The destruction of the Persian Empire and the defeat of the Indian kingdoms were the highlights that drove the popularity of the Alexander Romance in Europe. A version of this story was included in the Koran in which Alexander is called Dhulkarnain.

During the colonial period, British historians latched on to the Alexander legend and described the campaign as the triumph of the organised West against the chaotic East. Although Alexander defeated only a few minor kingdoms in India's northwest, in the view of many gleeful colonial writers the Greek conquest of India was complete.

In reality much of the country was not even known to the Greeks. So handing victory to Alexander is like describing Hitler as the conqueror of Russia because the Germans advanced up to Stalingrad.

### Zhukov's view of Alexander :

In 1957, while addressing the cadets of the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun, the great Russian general Georgy Zhukov said Alexander's actions after the Battle of Hydaspes suggest he had suffered an outright defeat. In Zhukov's view, Alexander had suffered a greater setback in India than Napoleon in Russia. Napoleon had invaded Russia with 600,000 troops; of these only 30,000 survived, and of that number fewer than 1,000 were able to return to duty.

If Zhukov compared Alexander's campaign in India to Napoleon's disaster, the Macedonians and Greeks must have retreated in an equally ignominious fashion. The WW II commander would recognise a fleeing army if he saw one; he had chased the Germans over 2000 km from Stalingrad to Berlin.

### No easy victories :

Alexander's troubles began as soon as he crossed the Indian border. He first faced resistance in the Kunar, Swat, Buner and Peshawar valleys where the Aspasiens (Iranian Aspa, Sanskrit Ashva = horse) and Assakenoi (Sanskrit Ashvakas or Asmakas, perhaps a branch of, or allied to, the Aspasioi), challenged his advance. Although mere specks on the map by Indian standards, they did not lack in courage and refused to submit before Alexander's killing machine.

The Aspasiens hold the distinction of being the first among the Indians to fight Alexander. The Roman historian Arrian writes in 'The Anabasis of Alexander' that with these people "the conflict was sharp, not only from the difficult nature of the ground, but also because the Indians were by far the stoutest warriors in that neighborhood".

The intensity of the fighting can be measured from the fact that during the siege Alexander and his two of leading commanders were wounded. Alexander was hit by a dart which penetrated the breastplate into his shoulder. But the wound was only a slight one, for the breastplate prevented the dart from penetrating right through his shoulder.

In the end the guile and superior numbers of Alexander's army won the day. The Macedonians captured 40,000 men and 230,000 oxen, transporting the choicest among the latter to their country for use as draft animals.

Alexander next attacked the hill state of Nysa, which probably occupied a site on the lower spurs and valleys of the Koh-i-Mor. It was governed by a body of aristocracy consisting of 300 members, Akouphis being their chief. The Nysaens readily submitted to the Macedonian king, and placed at his disposal a contingent of 300 cavalry. According to Rama Shankar Tripathi, the Nysaens claimed descent from Dionysius. "This gratified the vanity of Alexander, and he therefore allowed his weary troops to take rest and indulge in Bacchanalian revels for a few days with their alleged distant kinsmen."

### Greek guile defeats Massaga :

Alexander's next nemesis was the Assakenoi who offered stubborn resistance from their mountain strongholds of Massaga, Bazira and Ora. Realising the gravity of this new threat from the West, they raised an army of 20,000 cavalry and more than 30,000 infantry, besides 30 elephants.

The fighting at Massaga was bloody and prolonged, and became a prelude to what awaited Alexander in India. On the first day after bitter fighting the Macedonians and Greeks were forced to retreat with heavy losses. Alexander himself was seriously wounded in the ankle. On the fourth day the king of Massaga was killed but the city refused to surrender. The command of the army went to his old mother, which brought the entire women of the area into the fighting.

Realizing that his plans to storm India were going down at its very gates, Alexander called for a truce. Typical of Indian kingdoms right through history, the Assakenoi agreed to their eternal regret. While 7,000 Indian soldiers were leaving the city as per the agreement, Alexander's army launched a sudden and sneaky attack. Arrian writes: "Undaunted by this unexpected danger, the Indian mercenaries fought with great tenacity and "by their audacity and feats of valour made the conflict, in which they closed, hot work for the enemy".

When many of the Assakenoi had been killed, or were in the agony of deadly wounds, the women took up the arms of their fallen men and heroically defended the citadel along with the remaining male soldiers. After fighting desperately they were at last overpowered by superior numbers, and in the words of Diodoros "met a glorious death which they would have disdained to exchange for a life with dishonour". (Hindu women like Rani Padmini, who preferred to jump into the fires of jauhar rather than become captives, can trace their tradition of self-sacrifice and valour to antiquity.)

After the fall of Massaga, Alexander advanced further, and in the course of a few months' hard fighting captured the important and strategic fortresses of Ora (where a similar slaughter followed), Bazira, Aornos, Peukelaotis (Sanskrit = Pushkaravati, modern Charsadda in the Yusufzai territory), Embolima and Dyrta. (Due to the peculiar Greek orthography most of these cities are now impossible to identify or decipher.)

However, the fierce resistance put up by the Indian defenders had reduced the strength – and perhaps the confidence – of the until then all-conquering Macedonian army.

### Faceoff at the river :

In his entire conquering career Alexander's hardest encounter was the Battle of Hydaspes, in which he faced king Porus of Paurava, a small but prosperous Indian kingdom on the river Jhelum. Porus is described in Greek accounts as standing seven feet tall.

In May 326 BCE, the European and Paurava armies faced each other across the banks of the Jhelum. By all accounts it was an awe-inspiring spectacle. The 34,000 Macedonian infantry and 7000 Greek cavalry were bolstered by the Indian king Ambhi, who was Porus's rival. Ambhi

was the ruler of the neighbouring kingdom of Taxila and had offered to help Alexander on condition he would be given Porus's kingdom.

Facing this tumultuous force led by the genius of Alexander was the Paurava army of 20,000 infantry, 2000 cavalry and 200 war elephants. Being a comparatively small kingdom by Indian standards, Paurava couldn't have maintained such a large standing army, so it's likely many of its defenders were hastily armed civilians. Also, the Greeks habitually exaggerated enemy strength.

According to Greek sources, for several days the armies eyeballed each other across the river. The Greek-Macedonian force after having lost several thousand soldiers fighting the Indian mountain cities, were terrified at the prospect of fighting the fierce Paurava army. They had heard about the havoc Indian war elephants created among enemy ranks. The modern equivalent of battle tanks, the elephants also scared the wits out of the horses in the Greek cavalry.

Another terrible weapon in the Indians' armoury was the two-meter bow. As tall as a man it could launch massive arrows able to transfix more than one enemy soldier.

#### Indians strike :

The battle was savagely fought. As the volleys of heavy arrows from the long Indian bows scythed into the enemy's formations, the first wave of war elephants waded into the Macedonian phalanx that was bristling with 17-foot long sarissas. Some of the animals got impaled in the process. Then a second wave of these mighty beasts rushed into the gap created by the first. The elephants either trampled the Macedonian soldiers or grabbed them by their trunks and presented them up for the mounted Indian soldiers to spear them to their deaths. It was a nightmarish scenario for the invaders. As the terrified Macedonians pushed back, the Indian infantry charged into the gap.

In the first charge, by the Indians, Porus's son wounded both Alexander and his favorite horse Bucephalus, the latter fatally, forcing Alexander to dismount. (6) This was a big deal. In battles outside India the elite Macedonian bodyguards had provided an iron shield around their king, yet at Hydaspes the Indian troops not only broke into Alexander's inner cordon, they also killed Nicaea, one of his leading commanders.

According to the Roman historian Marcus Justinus, Porus challenged Alexander, who charged him on horseback. In the ensuing duel, Alexander fell off his horse and was at the mercy of the Indian king's spear. But Porus dithered for a second and Alexander's bodyguards rushed in to save their king.

Plutarch, the Greek historian and biographer, says there seems to have been nothing wrong with Indian morale. Despite initial setbacks, when their vaunted chariots got stuck in the mud, Porus's army "rallied and kept resisting the Macedonians with unsurpassable bravery".

#### Macedonians: Shaken, not stirred :

The Greeks claim Porus's army was eventually surrounded and defeated by Alexander's superior battle tactics, but there are too many holes in that theory. It is acknowledged by

Greek and Roman sources that the fierce and constant resistance put up by the Indian soldiers and ordinary people everywhere had shaken Alexander's army to the core. They refused to move further east. Nothing Alexander could say or do would spur his men to continue eastward. The army was close to mutiny. These are not the signs of a victorious army, but a defeated group of soldiers would certainly behave in this manner.

Says Plutarch: "The combat with Porus took the edge off the Macedonians' courage, and stayed their further progress into India. For having found it hard enough to defeat an enemy who brought but 20,000 foot and 2000 horse into the field, they thought they had reason to oppose Alexander's design of leading them on to pass the Ganges, on the further side of which was covered with multitudes of enemies."

The Greek historian says after the battle with the Pauravas, the badly bruised and rattled Macedonians panicked when they received information further from Punjab lay places "where the inhabitants were skilled in agriculture, where there were elephants in yet greater abundance and men were superior in stature and courage".

Indeed, on the other side of the Ganges was the mighty kingdom of Magadh, ruled by the wily Nandas, who commanded one of the most powerful and largest standing armies in the world. According to Plutarch, the courage of the Macedonians evaporated when they came to know the Nandas "were awaiting them with 200,000 infantry, 80,000 cavalry, 8000 war chariots and 6000 fighting elephants". Undoubtedly, Alexander's army would have walked into a slaughterhouse.

Hundreds of kilometres from the Indian heartland, Alexander ordered a retreat to great jubilation among his soldiers.

#### Partisans counter attack :

The celebrations were premature. On its way south towards the sea via Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan, Alexander's army was constantly harried by Indian partisans, republics and kingdoms.

In a campaign at Sangal in Punjab, the Indian attack was so ferocious it completely destroyed the Greek cavalry, forcing Alexander to attack on foot.

In the next battle, against the Malavs of Multan, he was felled by an Indian warrior whose arrow pierced the Macedonian's breastplate and ribs. Says Military History magazine: "Although there was more fighting, Alexander's wound put an end to any more personal exploits. Lung tissue never fully recovers, and the thick scarring in its place made every breath cut like a knife."

Alexander never recovered and died in Babylon (modern Iraq) at the age of 33.

The Battle of Hydaspes was Alexander's last major open-field battle. Everything else was a skirmish compared with it. The Macedonians and Greeks were not the same tough guys anymore; always on the retreat; constantly being harried by Indian kingdoms. If ever there was a defeated army, this one certainly behaved like one.



After defeating Persia in the year 334 BCE, Alexander of Macedon was irresistibly drawn towards the great Indian landmass. However, the Persians warned him the country was no easy target; that several famous conquerors had fallen at its gates.

The Persians told him that two centuries before Alexander's arrival, the great Zoroastrian king Cyrus had entered the northwest region to invade India, but lost, before reaching it, the greater part of his army. Only seven of his soldiers lived to see Persia again.

In an earlier antiquity, the Assyrian queen Semiramis, who had who crossed the Indus with 400,000 highly trained troops, escaped with just 20 men, the rest being slaughtered by the Indians.

Historian Krishna Chandra Sagar says 150 years before Alexander, Indian archers and cavalry formed a significant component of the Persian army and played an important role in subduing Thebes in central Greece.

But peace and quiet were unknown to Alexander. He was one of history's greatest warriors – a killing machine so relentless that his very oxygen was fighting, conquest and territorial expansion. Arrian, the Greek historian writes: "Alexander had no small or mean conceptions, nor would he ever have remained contented with any of his possessions so far, not even if he had added Europe to Asia, and the Britannic islands to Europe; but would always have searched far beyond for something unknown, being always the rival if of no other, yet of himself."

Therefore, when he heard of the failures of Semiramis and Cyrus, the Macedonian king declared that he wanted to invade India more than ever. It would prove to be a strategic blunder.

#### Zhukov's take :

"Following Alexander's failure to gain a position in India and the defeat of his successor Seleucus Nikator, relationships between the Indians and the Greeks and the Romans later, was mainly through trade and diplomacy. Also the Greeks and other ancient peoples did not see themselves as in any way superior, only different."

The above statement by Russia's legendary general Gregory Zhukov on the Macedonian invasion of India in 326 BCE is significant because unlike the prejudiced colonial and Western historians, the Greeks and later Romans viewed Indians differently.

According to Arrian, "Moreover, they discovered that they were tall in stature, in fact as tall as any men throughout Asia, most of them being five cubits in height, or a little less. They were blacker than the rest of men, except the Ethiopians ; and in war they were far the bravest of all the races inhabiting Asia at that time."

In fact, Arrian and other Greeks say the Indians were relentless in their attacks on the invaders. They say if the people of Punjab and Sindh were fierce, then in the eastern part of India "the men were superior in stature and courage".

All this is glossed over by Western historians, in whose view the one claimed victory over the small Paurava kingdom of Porus amounts to the "conquest of India". But the Greeks made no such claim.

### Battle of Hydaspes – hardest ever :

Greek contemporary writers describe the Battle of Hydaspes (Jhelum) in June 326 BCE as the hardest fought of all Alexander's battles. Frank Lee Holt, a professor of ancient history at the University of Houston, writes: "The only reference in Arrian's history to a victory celebration by Alexander's army was after the battle with Porus."

Alexander's army did not indulge in celebrations after the Battle of Gaugamela where they defeated a gigantic Persian army of 200,000 men. No wild festivities were announced after the Battle of Issus where they defeated a mixed force of Persian cavalry and Greek mercenaries. The fact they celebrated after the Battle of Hydaspes suggests they considered themselves extremely lucky to survive after the clash with the Hindu army, with its feared elephant corps. If Porus lost, why reward him?

One of the iconic exchanges in world history is that between the two kings. When Alexander met Porus after the battle, he is reported to have asked him how he wanted to be treated. Porus replied: "Like a king." If there was anything else he wanted for himself, Alexander said, he only had to ask. "Everything is included in that," Porus said.

This is certainly not an exchange between a victorious ruler and a defeated one, but it has all the appearance of a negotiation. According to Arrian, "When they met, Alexander reined in his horse and looked at his adversary with admiration. He was a magnificent figure of a man, over seven feet high and of great personal beauty; his bearing had lost none of its pride; his air was of one brave man meeting another, of a king in the presence of a king with whom he had fought honourably for his kingdom."

According to the Greeks, Alexander was apparently so impressed by Porus he gave back his kingdom plus the territories of king Ambhi of Taxila who had fought alongside the Macedonians. This is counterintuitive. Ambhi had become Alexander's ally on the condition he would be given Porus' kingdom. So why reward the enemy, whose army had just mauled the Macedonians?

The only possible answer is at the Battle of Hydaspes the Macedonians realised they were dealing with an enemy of uncommon valour. The mauling Alexander's troops received was a greater order of magnitude than ever before. Military historian Nigel Cawthorne says the Macedonian army suffered 4,000 casualties. That's a staggering number considering Paurava was a tiny kingdom.

A more probable scenario is that sensing defeat the Macedonians called for a truce, which Porus accepted. This is in line with the behaviour of Hindu kings throughout history – from Prithviraj Chauhan at the First Battle of Tarain in 1191 to the numerous wars fought against the British, to the 1948, 1965 and 1971 wars in the modern era, Hindus have shown an unbroken – and unnecessary – merciful streak. Instead of chasing the defeated army and finishing him off, they have allowed the foreign invader to live and fight another day.

At Hydaspes, the Indian king may have offered them a deal that was difficult to turn down. In return for his enemy Ambhi's territories – which would secure the Paurava kingdom's frontiers – Porus would assist the Macedonians in leaving India safely.

Alexander's post-Hydaspes charitable behavior, as described in Greek accounts, is uncharacteristic and unlikely. For, in several battles before and after Hydaspes, he had massacred or enslaved everyone in the cities he subdued.

#### Why pay off a vassal? :

Before the battle, Alexander gave king Ambhi 1000 talents (25,000 kilos) of gold for fighting alongside the Macedonians. The only explanation is Ambhi too was driving a hard bargain. He knew the rattled Macedonian army was seeking to quickly exit India. Ambhi thought he could use the Macedonians to remove his rival Porus. However, Porus' decision to offer Alexander combat checkmated those plans.

The reason for placating Ambhi with gifts was that the moment he stepped into India, Alexander had met fierce resistance. Comparatively small Hindu kingdoms had checked his advance at great cost to life and property. Unlike the Persian king who had fled from the battlefield, the rulers of republics such as the Aspasiens, Assakenoi, Bazira and Ora (located in or around the Swat Valley in modern Pakistans) had led from the front while defending their citadels. They nobly played their role as guardians of India's gateway.

At Massaga, for instance, 7,000 male and female Indian mercenaries decided to fight Alexander rather than switch allegiance and fight their hosts. They put up a fierce fight, meeting a glorious death "which they would have disdained to exchange for a life with dishonor".

#### Tired of fighting: Lame excuse :

Greek sources say Alexander retreated from India because his soldiers were weary, homesick and close to mutiny. This is a line happily latched on to by Western historians as it gives them the almost perfect alibi to bail out Alexander. But that's not how professional armies work. Imagine if German soldiers had told Hitler they were tired of fighting? They would have been summarily shot. In Alexander's time, the punishment was crucifixion.

The Macedonian army had a system of rotation whereby large batches of veteran soldiers were released to return home (with sufficient gold and slaves). In their place, fresh troops eager poured in from Europe.

Greek historian Diodorus Siculus notes that after the battle with the Paurava army, Alexander received a reinforcement from Greece at the river of more than 30,000 infantry and nearly 6,000 cavalry; also suits of armor for 25,000 infantry, and 100 talents of medical drugs.

#### Mutiny and inglorious retreat :

The Battle of Hydaspes had drained Macedonian morale; after the next battle, with the republic of the Kathas at Sangla, which left thousands of Macedonians killed and wounded, the army

was on the point of rebellion. The tipping point came when Pheges, an Indian king who decided not to fight but let Alexander pass through his territory, confirmed the massive size and ferociousness of the Nand army east of the Ganges.

Facing a mutiny, Alexander saved his face by offering a sacrifice to the gods as a preliminary to crossing the Indus. As expected the omens were unfavorable and Alexander ordered a retreat. "The army received the announcement with tears of joy and grateful shouts," writes historian, numismatist and archaeologist Awadh Kishore Narain. "They hardly realized what was still in store for them. For Alexander had yet to fight some of his fiercest and most dangerous battles."

In January 325, Alexander learnt that the Oxydracae (Shudraks) and the Malli (Malavs), who lived around modern Multan, were mobilising to block his path to the sea. Note that these two kingdoms could have chosen to let the Macedonian army pass through their territories; the foreign soldiers would have looted some crops and cattle and the Indian republics could not have had to endure sieges and loss of life. But instead the Shudrakas and Malavs mobilised an army of 100,000 men and 900 war chariots.

Faced with the prospect of fighting once more, Alexander's men were soon on the point of rebellion. Alexander had to lie to them that the people ahead were not warlike and the ocean was close (it was almost 700 km further south) so the troops would agree to fight.

The plight of the Macedonian army has an uncanny resemblance to the travails faced by two large and defeated armies of the past – Napoleon's Grande Armee and the German Wehrmacht. Both armies were harried by Russian partisans all the way from Moscow to the border of Russia. It is always the defeated army that is harried, not a winning one.

Indeed, if they were weary of constant warring, it is inexplicable why these soldiers chose to fight their way through obstinately hostile Indian territories. The homesick soldiers would have preferred the garrisoned northwestern route they took while coming in. Why would a brilliant commander subject himself and his troops to further violence when all they wanted was a peaceful passage home?

Clearly, Alexander and the Macedonians were in a mess and not thinking straight. Not the sign of a victorious army.

#### Hindu resistance :

In order to understand the scale and intensity of the resistance the Macedonians faced in India, one only has to look at Alexander's march from Kabul to the Beas to the lower Indus. Narain writes: "Alexander took almost two years to cover this area, which is proportionately a longer time for a lesser space than in his other campaigns, and the battles fought were as dangerous, as glorious, as full of bravery and adventure."

A vivid example of the Macedonian army coming unstuck was during the battle against the Malavs. Cawthorne writes: "Alexander called for scaling ladders, but his men refused to climb them. So he climbed up alone, holding a light shield over his head. At the top he killed the

defenders who barred his way, then stood alone on top of the battlements – the perfect target for any archer.”

The Macedonians still refused to follow their king, and in fact begged him to come down. Alexander was so frustrated that he jumped down inside the citadel. It was only at this point that the Macedonians gathered their wits and courage and decided to save their king. Alexander was joined by Leonnatus and Abreas, a highly decorated guards officer. The Macedonians rallied and stormed the gate but were greeted by a volley of arrows. Abreas fell, shot in the face, and Alexander was struck by an arrow that pierced his breastplate and lodged in his chest.

The enraged Macedonians killed all the men, women and children in the fort. “This campaign of brutality now became part of Alexander’s strategy. The violent resistance slowed down the army’s progress and it took Alexander five months to reach the sea. During this period he fought a series of bloody battles in a war largely inspired by Brahmin priests. He hanged any Brahmin that fell into his hands, reserving crucifixion for civil leaders that opposed him. He asked one Brahmin why he had encouraged his king to revolt. His reply was: ‘Because I wished him to live with honor or die with honor.’ This bloodthirsty repression simply stored up resentment for the future. By 300 BCE, every Macedonian garrison in Punjab had been slaughtered.”

#### Death in the desert :

After reaching the mouth of the Indus river, Alexander divided his army into two. One part was to leave by ships that would hug the Makran coast and sail to Babylon (modern Iraq). The second army led by Alexander would march on foot (as his cavalry had been entirely destroyed by Indians at Sangla) through Balochistan into Persia and enter Babylon.

Alexander’s march through modern Balochistan, during which he lost the majority of his troops, as well as the accompanying women and children, shows he was willing to take a punt on the merciless desert rather than face the Indians in the northwest all over again. Undoubtedly, the Aspasiens, Assakenoi, Massagans and others, whose homelands he had devastated, would have challenged his weary army on the narrow mountain passes.

Nineteenth century philologist John McCrindle’s account offers ample light on the humiliations faced by Alexander’s men, suggesting they were a demoralised army. “Most of Alexander’s historians admit that all the hardships which his army suffered in Asia are not to be compared with the miseries which it here experienced,” he writes.

Owing to the great length of the march, the soldiers suffered greatly, tortured alike by raging heat and unquenchable thirst. When their provisions ran short the soldiers came together and killed most of the horses and mules. They ate the flesh of these animals, which they professed had died of thirst and perished from the heat. No one cared to look very narrowly into the exact nature of what was going on, both because of the prevailing distress and also because all were alike implicated in the same offence.

Alexander himself was not unaware of what was going on, but he saw that the remedy for the existing state of things was to pretend ignorance of it rather than permit it as a matter that lay within his cognisance.

What followed was one of the saddest episodes of the Macedonian campaign. With the horses and mules being eaten, it was no longer easy to convey the soldiers labouring under sickness, nor others who had fallen behind on the march from exhaustion, nor the women and children in the baggage train. Thousands were left behind on the road from sickness, others from fatigue or the effects of the heat or intolerable thirst, while there were none who could take them forward or remain to tend them in their sickness. "The majority perished in the sand like shipwrecked men at sea," writes McCrindle.

#### Need for glory :

David J. Lonsdale, a lecturer in Strategic Studies at the University of Hull, writes: "Alexander's invasion of India and Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812 both appear reckless and unnecessary from a strategic perspective. Therefore, perhaps they can both be explained by the sheer naked ambition of the two commanders."

Alexander's tragedy was he was in a Catch-22 situation. The Macedonians and Greeks welcomed the wealth from the conquered lands, but the man who ensured this flow was virtually *persona non grata* back home.

In Greek eyes a Macedonian was a barbarian. Much as he wished to be treated as a demigod, the Greeks didn't acknowledge as having any Hellenic heritage. In fact, they hated Alexander for sacking their cities and enslaving the people of the Greek cities. In his own country, he was an outsider for being half-Albanian, from his mother's side. Some even suspected him of murdering his own father.

So in order to retain the loyalty of his troops, Alexander had to wage constant war while also taking great personal risks in battle. For, he could not be seen as weak, let alone beaten.

Creating myths and resorting to falsehoods were integral to Alexander's strategy. A few years before the Indian campaign, a part of the Macedonian army was massacred by the Scythians at Polytimetus, present day Tajikistan. In order to avoid loss of morale, Alexander warned his surviving troops not to discuss the massacre with other soldiers who were to follow him into India.

The mythmaking around the Alexander cult had reached such ridiculous proportions that Strabo the Greek historian wrote: "Generally speaking, the men who have written on the affairs of India were a set of liars...Of this we became the more convinced whilst writing the history of Alexander."

#### Conclusion :

The contemporary Indian observations made by the kings and priests are at once philosophical and patriotic. According to Narain, "They indicate two things. First, there was an emotional love of freedom and a patriotic sense of honour. Secondly, India, with her peculiarly

philosophical attitude, was not at all overawed by the greatness of Alexander and not only regarded the Indian campaign as most unjustifiable but also anticipated its futility."

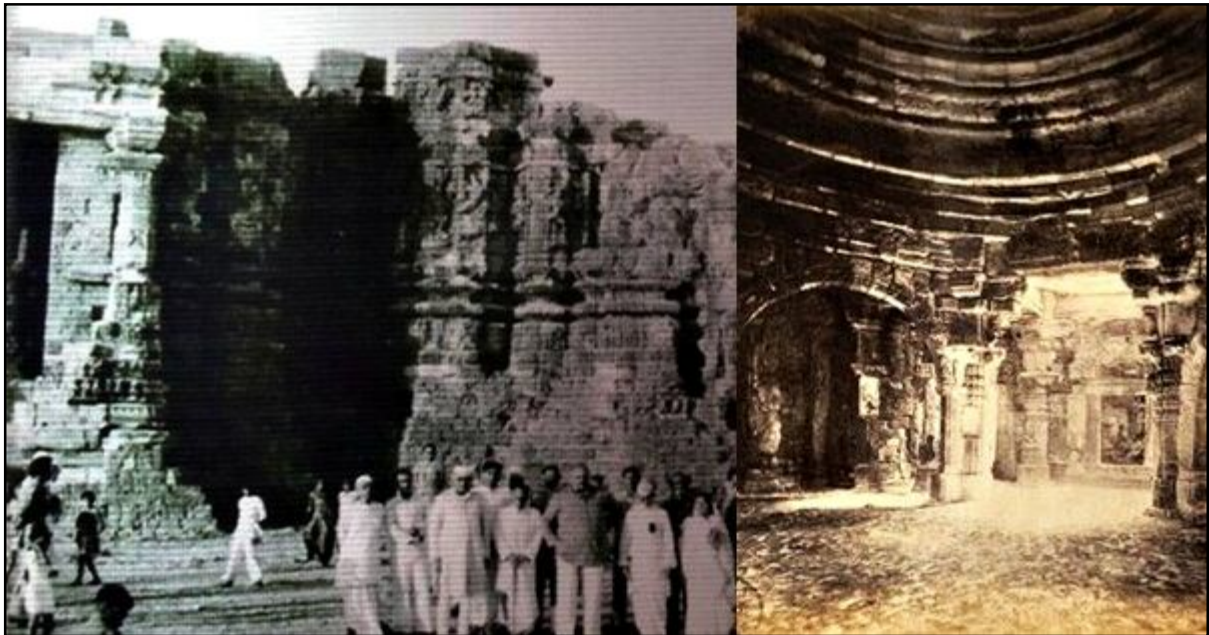
Both Chanakya and the youthful Chandragupta Maurya, who seem to have had a firsthand view of Alexander's campaign in Punjab, understood the Indian pulse of reaction correctly.

Narain concludes: "Even while Alexander was in Gedrosia (Balochistan), the only alien satrap appointed by him in India was murdered and when Alexander was dying in Babylon, Chandragupta Maurya and Chanakya, perhaps with the help of Porus, were liberating and unifying Punjab as a prelude to the final overthrow of the great Nanda power of the Ganges valley, which the army of Alexander had feared so much that the latter was forced to withdraw from the Beas. Alexander's campaign in India was therefore certainly not a political success. And it is also true that it left no permanent mark on its literature, life or government of the people. The name of Alexander is not found in Indian literature. Certainly, Alexander did not intend his conquests in India to be as meaningless as this. But it was so."

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### 23. Somnath 1000 Years ago :



#### **Somnath a 1000 Years Ago: Gemstone Carvings, 2000 Priests, 3 Lakh Visitors**

India has always fascinated the world in one or the other ways. In ancient and early medieval period we were famous for being a country where riches overflowed and true it was. We were truly and correctly called Sone ki Chidiya (Golden Bird). Gold has always been the favorite of Indians as it is considered something very precious and quite often offered to the deities. We have been from time immemorial, very generous in donating for religious purposes. This trend continues even today. So obviously temples have always been the richest places in India. It was this whiff of unimaginable wealth that has brought hounds and bloodhounds like Mahmud of Ghazni to our door steps. He was a plunderer and looted huge amount of wealth from his numerous raids.

Persian historian Firishta has given a detailed account of the loot and plunder committed by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. Mahmud plundered and looted India 17 times. According to Firishta, with the wealth looted from India, Mahmud turned Ghazna that covered Pakistan, eastern Iran, and parts of Afghanistan into a wealthy empire. Every household, as described by Firishta, was abundantly rich with several slaves (captives taken from India, especially women).

Mahmud had heard a lot about the vast wealth stored in Somnath temple. He marched towards Somnath with a huge army. The rulers of Gujarat offered a stiff resistance to save Somnath temple. The battle continued for several days until Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni gained hold of the shrine. It was 1024 AD. Here is Firishta's account of the battle.



The battle raged with great fury: victory was long doubtful, till two Indian princes, Brahma Dew and Dabishleem, with other reinforcements, joined their countrymen during the action, and inspired them with fresh courage. Mahmood at this moment perceiving his troops to waver, leaped from his horse, and, prostrating himself before God<sup>31</sup> implored his assistance. Then mounting again, he took Abool Hussun, the Circassian (one of his generals), by the hand, by way of encouragement, and advanced on the enemy. At the same time he cheered his troops with such energy, that, ashamed to abandon their King, with whom they had so often fought and bled, they, with one accord, gave a loud shout and rushed forwards. In this charge the Moslems broke through the enemy's line, and laid 5000 Hindoos dead at their feet. The rout became general. The garrison of

Description of Somnath Temple according to Firishta :

- Superb edifice built of hewn stone
- Lofty roof supported by fifty-six pillars
- Wonderful carvings in the ceilings, walls, and pillars
- All carvings set with precious stones
- In the centre of the hall was Somnath, a stone idol, five yards in height, two of which were sunk in the ground
- No lighting arrangements except one pendant lamp
- Jewels studded in the idols and walls reflected on the pendant lamp which brightened the dark interiors!

Ancient and medieval temples of India had arrangements for lighting at night. Somnath temple had no lighting arrangements even for the night except one pendant lamp? The whole interiors of the Somnath temple were so full of jewels studded in the idols and walls that reflection of the pendant lamp on the jewels brightened the dark interiors! How gifted ancient Indians were!! A huge chain of gold, weighing 200 muns hung from the top of the building by a ring; it supported a great bell, as also present in Hindu temples at the entrance of the temple or/and at the entrance of the Garbhgrah. The weight of 1 mun varies from 2lb to 11lb according to medieval era historians. 1 lb = 454 gm. Going by today's context, 1 mun is considered equivalent to 40-45 kgs, especially in Rural India.

Do you know a group of Brahmins offered a huge donation of gold to keep the Garbhagriha, i.e. idol of Somnath untouched? While the Sultan's men agreed and even tried to convince their master, the Sultan disagreed. He gave a reason. To quote Firishta, "if he should consent to such a measure, his name would be handed down to posterity as 'Mahmood the idol-seller' whereas he was desirous of being known as 'Mahmood the destroyer' he therefore directed the troops to proceed in their work.". Here is Firishta's description of the same:

and Medina. It is a well authenticated fact, that when Mahmood was thus employed in destroying this idol, a crowd of Brahmins petitioned his attendants, and offered a quantity of gold if the King would desist from further mutilation. His officers endeavoured to persuade him to accept of the money; for they said that breaking one idol would not do away with idolatry altogether; that, therefore, it could serve no purpose to destroy the image entirely; but that such a sum of money given in charity among true believers would be a meritorious act. The King acknowledged there might be reason in what they said, but replied, that if he should consent to such a measure, his name would be handed down to posterity as "Mahmood the idol-seller," whereas he was desirous of being known as "Mahmood the destroyer": he therefore directed the troops to proceed in their work. The next blow broke open the belly of Somnat, which was hollow, and discovered a quantity of diamonds, rubies, and pearls, of much greater value than the amount which the Brahmins had offered.

Mahmud ordered his men to break the idol of Somnath. The hollow belly of the deity was filled with precious gem stones like diamonds, rubies, pearls, sapphires, etc. The barbaric plunderers broke the idol and from the belly they discovered vast wealth. The value of the precious stones was much higher than the huge amount of wealth offered by the Brahmins to save the idol. Here is Firishta's description of the same.

desirous of being known as "Mahmood the destroyer": he therefore directed the troops to proceed in their work. The next blow broke open the belly of Somnat, which was hollow, and discovered a quantity of diamonds, rubies, and pearls, of much greater value than the amount which the Brahmins had offered.

To quote Firishta again, "The King, approaching the image, raised his mace and struck off its nose. He ordered two pieces of the idol to be broken off and sent to Ghizny, that one might be thrown at the threshold of the public mosque, and the other at the court door of his own palace.... Two more fragments were reserved to be sent to Mecca and Medina." When Firishta wrote the book, it was past 600 years of the destruction of Somnath by Sultan Mahmud. Firishta wrote that the identical fragments of the Somnath idol were seen at Ghazni during his times!

Somnath Temple facts A 1000 Years agoSOMNATH TEMPLE FACTS A 1000 years ago :

- 3 lakh visitors to the temple during eclipses
- Regular donations by rulers/devotees from far and near
- 2000 villages were bestowed to the Somnath temple authorities for the maintenance of the temple. (Ancient scriptures and surveys by Britishers corroborate the grant of villages by rulers for maintaining temples. Besides, temples also served as learning centres and as treasury).

- Shivalingam was bathed twice with Ganga Jal every day (Temple authorities regularly traveled thousand miles to carry Gangajal from Haridwar to Somnath!)
- 2000 Brahmins served as priests in the temple
- 300 barbers were appointed so that devotees shave before visiting sanctum
- No royal treasury ever contained such vast wealth
- Besides main Somnath idol, there were thousands of other idols of deities in gold and silver.

As per Firishta, the Somnath temple was a storehouse of vast wealth. No other royal treasury ever contained such vast wealth. Mahmud looted all the wealth of the temple. To quote Firishta, "Among the spoils of the temple was a chain of gold, weighing 200\* muns, which hung from the top of the building by a ring; it supported a great bell, which called the people to worship. The King of Ghizny found in this temple a greater quantity of jewels and gold than it is thought any royal treasury ever contained before. Besides the great idol above mentioned, there were in the temple some thousands of small images, wrought in gold and silver, of various shapes and dimensions."

**The King of Ghizny found in this temple a greater quantity of jewels and gold than it is thought any royal treasury ever contained before. In the Zein-ool-Maasir it is related that there were no lights in the temple, except one pendent lamp, which, being reflected from the jewels, spread a bright gleam over the whole edifice. Besides the great idol above mentioned, there were in the temple some thousands of small images, wrought in gold and silver, of various shapes and dimensions.**  
**Mahmood, having secured the wealth of Somnat, prepared**

Somnath temple was looted and plundered several times. Besides Mahmud of Ghazni, several Islamic plunderers including Alauddin Khilji and Aurangzeb looted and destroyed it. Even the Portugese left no stone unturned to see it in ruins. And each time, it was reconstructed by the Hindus. Worshipping continues here since antiquity. The looters perished so did their dynasties and prowess. But the temple continues to retain the cultural identity and faith of an ancient civilization and religion.

Source :

<https://www.myindiamyglory.com/2019/01/31/somnath-a-1000-years-ago-gemstone-carvings-2000-priests-3-lakh-visitors/?fbclid=IwAR2iCuK9ugHfxI1y8IisIYWBruiabu4dOoxUfRCNmGK30W9bIH8hdL41pk>

## 24. How Sultan Mahmud, Allauddin Khilji, Aurangzeb Looted and Destroyed Somnath :



Somnath temple! The first among the 12 jyotirling shrines of Lord Shiv. Located in Prabhaskshetra near Veraval in Saurashtra region on the western coast of Gujarat. Prabhaskshetra is the place where Krishn and Balaram went on a task related to offering of gurudakshina to their Guru Sandipani. A four hours journey from here and you shall reach the ancient kingdom of Dwarka, established by Krishn. A region that carries the legacy of India's rich cultural and historical heritage!

Ancient Hindu scriptures find mention of Somnath temple as a pilgrimage site. The convergence of three rivers – Kapil, Hiran and Saraswati deem it as Triveni sangam. According to Puranic history, Som, the moon god bathed in the Saraswati river to regain his lustre, which he had lost to a curse. It is one of the places where Lord Shiv is believed to have appeared as a fiery column of light.

Do you know Somnath temple, which was renowned worldwide for holding great treasury was looted and plundered several times? And each time, it was reconstructed just to be more splendid than the previous one. It started with Mahmud of Ghazni followed by Alauddin Khilji and Aurangzeb. Even the Portugese left no stone unturned to see it in ruins.

There are no historical references as to who built the first shrine. Its mention in scriptures suggests its construction many years before the Christian era. One of the first few rulers involved in construction of Somnath temple was a Yadav king of Vallabhipur of coastal Gujarat around 649 CE. Nagabhat II, a Gurjar Pratihar king, was on a pilgrimage to this site during his reign in 815 CE. He found the temple almost razed to the grounds. The temple was looted, plundered, and razed to the ground by Al-Junayd, the Arab governor of Sindh as part of his invasions of Gujarat and Rajasthan. Nagabhat II reconstructed the temple using red sandstone.

Other kings involved in reconstruction of the temple after repeat plundering were Chaulukya kings Mulraj, Bhim I, and Kumarpal. According to an 1169 inscription, Kumarpal rebuilt it in 'excellent stone and studded it with jewels'. Parmar King Bhoj of Malwa, Mahipal I, the

Chudasama king of Saurashtra and his son Khengar again reconstructed it after it was plundered by invaders.

India was known to be the richest country in the world. Temples were then not just places of worship, but also were treasuries. Pilgrims including kings from far away places donated wealth including gold and precious jewels excessively to the Somnath temple. Do you know out of the numerous loot, destruction, and plundering of the Somnath temple, the worst were committed by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, Allauddin Khilji, and Aurangzeb?

By Mahmud of Ghazni :

During the period between 1000 and 1027 AD, Sultan Mahmud attacked India 17 times. Two key objectives behind his attack was to spread Islam and to accumulate the country's vast wealth. During his campaign, he razed hundreds of temples to the ground and looted the treasury. He killed thousands of Hindus, sparing only those who converted to Islam.

Sultan Mahmud attacked Gujarat in 1025 during the reign of Bhima I. The king and his army made a stiff resistance, but in vain. He plundered the Somnath temple and looted all the riches. The booty was worth 20 million dinars, more than all of the wealth the Sultan accumulated during his first loot of India! He then razed the temple to the ground and himself broke the jyotirling into pieces. He massacred all the worshippers and defenders. He then set the temple site on fire. He carted the stone fragments of the lingam to Ghazni and used them to built steps of the city's mosque. The temple had sandalwood gates; he carried the gates to Afghanistan.

By Allauddin Khilji :

Allauddin Khilji commissioned Ulugh Khan in 1299 for invasion of Gujarat. Vaghela king Karna was then the ruler of Gujarat; Khilji's army defeated him and sacked the Somnath temple. Khilji had ordered massacre of Hindus and looting of wealth from the temples his army plundered. Hasan Nizami, a Persian poet and historian, who lived in the 12th and 13th centuries wrote in his book Taj-ul-Ma'sir, the first official history of the Delhi Sultanate about Allauddin Khilji boasting about the plunder of Somnath that "fifty thousand infidels were dispatched to hell by the sword" and "more than twenty thousand slaves, and cattle beyond all calculation fell into the hands of the victors".

While Khilji's army was returning to Delhi with the Somnath temple booty, Shivling, and Hindu prisoners, Jalore Rajput prince Biram Dev attacked them. They defeated Ulugh Khan and snatched the booty along with the Shivling. They freed the Hindu prisoners.

Khilji's illegitimate daughter Firoza had fallen in love with Biram Dev after she saw him wrestle in a wrestling match. The Sultan asked for Biram Dev's hand in marriage with his daughter at the same time pointing out that he should convert to Islam. Biram Dev denounced Khilji's marriage proposal. This was followed by his attack of Khilji's army and snatching of the booty and Shivling. An angry Khilji sent a huge army to Jalore. The battle continued for 2 long years without fail. Biram Dev and his father Kanhaddev breathed their last in the battle, defending Jalore. Many Rajput women performed jauhar, to save themselves from disgrace at the hands of the enemy. Khilji's army ransacked the entire fort of Jalore, killed all Hindus and razed

temples to the ground. He searched for the Somnath Temple booty and the Shivling, but could not locate them. Later, Khilji converted the ruined fort into a Muslim monument.

#### By Aurangzeb :

Aurangzeb, during his reign, had ordered destruction of temples at various places across his dominion. Though Somnath temple was razed to the ground several times and its wealth looted by plunderers and invaders, successive rulers erected the temple to its lost glory and riches. Aurangzeb further ordered that if any temples including the Somnath were reconstructed, they should be demolished again completely so that Hindus could not revive worship at the sites.

According to SH Desai's book Prabhas and Somnath, following Aurangzeb's order, local Muslims of Prabhas along with few of Aurangzeb's army vandalized the Somnath temple. They were about to raze the temple to the ground when Hindus in large numbers rushed to the spot. A Muslim official slaughtered a cow in response besides killing two of the temple priests. A clash ensued between the two parties. As the Hindus outnumbered, Aurangzeb's men left the site. Later, they only returned with a bigger army and succeeded in destroying the temple and looting the treasury.

The present standing edifice was the result of the efforts of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who was instrumental in reviving and reconstructing the splendor of the original site. It was designed by temple architect Prabhaschandar. K. M. Munshi, who was then head of the temple trust, termed Somnath temple as the 'eternal shrine' in his book on the temple's history. Dr. Rajendra Prasad installed the jyotirling in the new temple on May 11, 1951. Do you know Jawaharlal Nehru objected allotment of funds for reconstruction of the temple. Nehru even went to the extent of dissuading Rajendra Prasad in presiding over the installation ceremony of the shrine. The temple is presently under the maintenance of Shree Somnath Trust.

Disclaimer: The views expressed here are solely of the author. My India My Glory does not assume any responsibility for the validity or information shared in this article by the author.

#### Source :

<https://www.myindiamyglory.com/2017/12/02/how-sultan-mahmud-allauddin-khilji-aurangzeb-looted-and-destroyed-somnath/>

## 25. Mahmud of Ghazni :

Not to be confused with *Mahmud Hotak* or *Mahmud Ghazan*.

<b>Mahmud of Ghazni</b> ی غزنو محمود	
Medieval illustration of Mahmud and his court	
<b>Sultan of the Ghaznavid Empire</b>	
<b>Reign</b>	998 – 30 April 1030
<b>Predecessor</b>	Ismail of Ghazni
<b>Successor</b>	Muhammad of Ghazni
<b>Born</b>	2 November 971 Ghazni, Zabulistan, Samanid Empire
<b>Died</b>	30 April 1030 (aged 58) Ghazni, Zabulistan, Ghaznavid Empire
<b>Burial</b>	Ghazni
<b>Issue</b>	Jalal al-Dawla Muhammad Shihab al-Dawla Masud Izz al-Dawla Abd al-Rashid Suleiman Shuja
<b>Full name</b> Yamīn-ud-Dawla Abul-Qāṣim Maḥmūd ibn Sebüktegīn	
<b>Persian</b>	ن ی س ب ک ت گ بن محمود ابوالقاسم الدوله ن ی می
<b>Dynasty</b>	Ghaznavid
<b>Father</b>	Sabuktigin
<b>Religion</b>	Sunni Islam

Mahmud of Ghazni (Persian: محمود غزنوی; 2 November 971 – 30 April 1030) was the first independent ruler of the Ghaznavid dynasty, ruling from 998 to 1030. At the time of his death, his kingdom had been transformed into an extensive military empire, which extended from northwestern Iran proper to the Punjab in the Indian subcontinent, Khwarazm in Transoxiana, and Makran.

Highly Persianized, Mahmud continued the bureaucratic, political, and cultural customs of his predecessors, the Samanids, which proved to establish the groundwork for a Persianate state in northern India. His capital of Ghazni evolved into a significant cultural, commercial, and intellectual center in the Islamic world, almost rivaling the important city of Baghdad. The capital appealed to many prominent figures, such as al-Biruni and Ferdowsi.



He was the first ruler to hold the title *Sultan* ("authority"), signifying the extent of his power while at the same time preserving an ideological link to the suzerainty of the Abbasid Caliphate. During his rule, he invaded and plundered parts of the Indian subcontinent (east of the Indus River) seventeen times.

#### Background :

Mahmud was born in the town of Ghazni in the region of Zabulistan (now present-day Afghanistan) on 2 November 971. His father, Sabuktigin, was a Turkic slave commander (*ghilman*) who laid foundations to the Ghaznavid dynasty in Ghazni in 977, which he ruled as a subordinate of the Samanids, who ruled Khorasan and Transoxiana. Mahmud's mother was the daughter of an Iranian aristocrat from Zabulistan, and is therefore known in some sources as Mahmud-i Zavuli ("Mahmud from Zabulistan"). Not much about Mahmud's early life is known, he was a school-fellow of Ahmad Maymandi, a Persian native of Zabulistan and foster brother of his.

#### Family :

Mahmud married a woman named Kausari Jahan, and they had twin sons Mohammad and Ma'sud, who succeeded him one after the other; his grandson by Mas'ud, Maw'dud Ghaznavi, also later became ruler of the empire. His sister, Sitr-e-Mu'alla, was married to Dawood bin Atallah Alavi, also known as Ghazi Salar Sahu, whose son was Ghazi Saiyyad Salar Masud.

Mahmud's companion was a Georgian slave Malik Ayaz, and his love for him inspired poems and stories.

#### Early career :



#### **Sultan Mahmud and his forces attacking the fortress of Zaranj**

In 994 Mahmud joined his father Sabuktigin in the capture of Khorasan from the rebel Fa'iq in aid of the Samanid Emir, Nuh II. During this period, the Samanid Empire became highly unstable, with shifting internal political tides as various factions vied for control, the chief among them being Abu'l-Qasim Simjuri, Fa'iq, Abu Ali, the General Bekhtuzin as well as the neighbouring Buyid dynasty and Kara-Khanid Khanate.

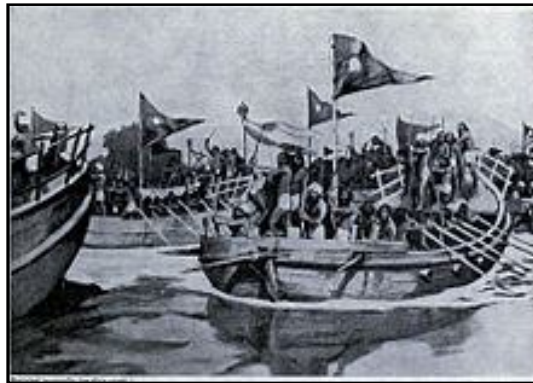


## Reign :

Sabuktigin died in 997, and was succeeded by his son Ismail as the ruler of the Ghaznavid dynasty. The reason behind Sabuktigin's choice to appoint Ismail as heir over the more experienced and older Mahmud is uncertain. It may be due to Ismail's mother being the daughter of Sabuktigin's old master, Alptigin. Mahmud shortly revolted, and with the help of his other brother, Abu'l-Muzaffar, the governor of Bust, he defeated Ismail the following year at the battle of Ghazni and gained control over the Ghaznavid kingdom. That year, in 998, Mahmud then traveled to Balkh and paid homage to Amir Abu'l-Harith Mansur b. Nur II. He then appointed Abu'l-Hasan Isfaraini as his vizier, and then set out west from Ghazni to take the Kandahar region followed by Bost (Lashkar Gah), where he turned it into a militarised city. Mahmud initiated the first of numerous invasions of North India. On 28 November 1001, his army fought and defeated the army of Raja Jayapala of the Kabul Shahis at the battle of Peshawar. In 1002 Mahmud invaded Sistan and dethroned Khalaf ibn Ahmad, ending the Saffarid dynasty. From there he decided to focus on Hindustan to the southeast, particularly the highly fertile lands of the Punjab region.

Mahmud's first campaign to the south was against an Ismaili state first established at Multan in 965 by a da'i from the Fatimid Caliphate in a bid to curry political favor and recognition with the Abbasid Caliphate; he also engaged elsewhere with the Fatimids. At this point, Jayapala attempted to gain revenge for an earlier military defeat at the hands of Mahmud's father, who had controlled Ghazni in the late 980s and had cost Jayapala extensive territory. His son Anandapala succeeded him and continued the struggle to avenge his father's suicide. He assembled a powerful confederacy that suffered defeat as his elephant turned back from the battle at a crucial moment, turning the tide into Mahmud's favor once more at Lahore in 1008 and bringing Mahmud into control of the Shahi dominions of Udbandpura.

## Ghaznavid campaigns in Indian Subcontinent :



### **Mahmud of Ghazni's last success in India against the Jats**

Following the defeat of the Indian Confederacy, after deciding to retaliate for their combined resistance, Mahmud then set out on regular expeditions against them, leaving the conquered kingdoms in the hands of Hindu vassals and annexing only the Punjab region. He also vowed to raid and loot the wealthy region of northwestern India every year.

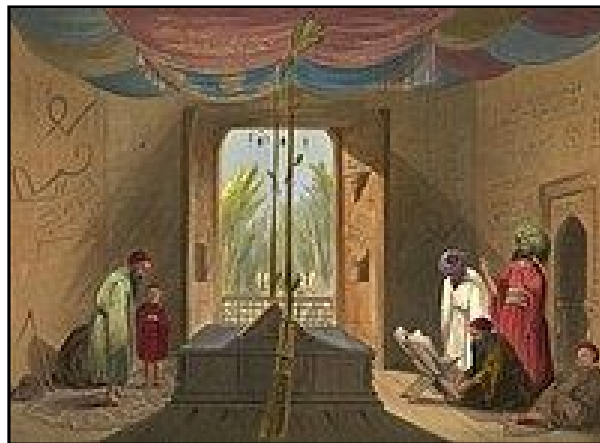
In 1001 Mahmud of Ghazni first invaded modern day Afghanistan and Pakistan and then parts of India. Mahmud defeated, captured, and later released the Shahi ruler Jayapala, who had

moved his capital to Peshawar (modern Pakistan). Jayapala killed himself and was succeeded by his son Anandapala. In 1005 Mahmud of Ghazni invaded Bhatia (probably Bhera), and in 1006 he invaded Multan, at which time Anandapala's army attacked him. The following year Mahmud of Ghazni attacked and crushed Sukhapala, ruler of Bathinda (who had become ruler by rebelling against the Shahi kingdom). In 1013, during Mahmud's eighth expedition into eastern Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Shahi kingdom (which was then under Trilochanapala, son of Anandapala) was overthrown.

In 1014 Mahmud led an expedition to Thanesar. The next year he unsuccessfully attacked Kashmir. In 1018 he attacked Mathura and defeated a coalition of rulers there while also killing a ruler called Chandrapal. In 1021 Mahmud supported the Kannauj king against Chandel Gand, who was defeated. That same year Shahi Trilochanapala was killed at Rahib and his son Bhimapala succeeded him. Lahore (modern Pakistan) was annexed by Mahmud. Mahmud besieged Gwalior, in 1023, where he was given tribute. Mahmud attacked Somnath in 1025, and its ruler Bhim I fled. The next year, he captured Somnath and marched to Kachch against Bhima I. That same year Mahmud also attacked the Jat people of Jud.

The Indian kingdoms of Nagarkot, Thanesar, Kannauj, and Gwalior were all conquered and left in the hands of Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist kings as vassal states and he was pragmatic enough not to neglect making alliances and enlisting local peoples into his armies at all ranks. Since Mahmud never kept a permanent presence in the northwestern subcontinent, he engaged in a policy of destroying Hindu temples and monuments to crush any move by the Hindus to attack the Empire; Nagarkot, Thanesar, Mathura, Kannauj, Kalinjar (1023) and Somnath all submitted or were raided.

#### Attack on the Somnath Temple :



A painting of the tomb of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, in 1839–40, with sandalwood doors long believed to have been plundered from Somnath, which he destroyed in c. 1024, but later found to be replicas of the original.

In 1025 Mahmud raided Gujarat, plundering the Somnath temple and breaking its *vyotirlinga*. He took away a booty of 2 million dinars. Historians estimate the damage to the temple to have been minimal because there are records of pilgrimages to the temple in 1038 that make no mention of any damage. However, powerful legends with intricate detail had developed

regarding Mahmud's raid in the Turko-Persian literature, which "electrified" the Muslim world according to scholar Meenakshi Jain.

### Historiography concerning Somnath :

Historians including Thapar, Eaton, and A. K. Majumdar have questioned the iconoclastic historiography of this incident. Thapar quoted Majumdar (1956):

But, as is well known, Hindu sources do not give any information regarding the raids of Sultan Mahmud, so that what follows is based solely on the testimony of Muslim authors.

Thapar also argued against the prevalent narrative:

Yet in a curiously contradictory manner, the Turko-Persian narratives were accepted as historically valid and even their internal contradictions were not given much attention, largely because they approximated more closely to the current European sense of history than did the other sources.



Silver jitals of Mahmud of Ghazni with bilingual Arabic and Sanskrit minted in Lahore 1028. Legend – averse: la ilaha illa'llah muhammad rasulullah sal allahu alayhi wa sallam; reverse: avyaktam eka muhammada avatāra nrpati mahamuda.

### Political challenges :

The last four years of Mahmud's life were spent contending with the influx of Oghuz and Seljuk Turks from Central Asia and the Buyid dynasty. Initially, after being repulsed by Mahmud, the Seljuks retired to Khwarezm, but Togrül and Çagri led them to capture Merv and Nishapur (1028–1029). Later, they repeatedly raided and traded territory with his successors across Khorasan and Balkh and even sacked Ghazni in 1037. In 1040, at the Battle of Dandanaqan, they decisively defeated Mahmud's son, Mas'ud I, resulting in Mas'ud abandoning most of his western territories to the Seljuks.

Sultan Mahmud died on 30 April 1030. His mausoleum is located in Ghazni, Afghanistan.

## Campaign timeline :

### As emir :

- 994: Gains the title of Saif ad-Dawla and becomes Governor of Khorasan under service to Nuh II of the Samanid Empire in civil strife
- 995: The Samanid rebels Fa'iq (leader of a court faction that had defeated Alptigin's nomination for Emir) and Abu Ali expel Mahmud from Nishapur. Mahmud and Sabuktigin defeat Samanid rebels at Tus.

### As sultan :

- 997: Kara-Khanid Khanate
- 999: Khorasan, Balkh, Herat, Merv from the Samanids. A concurrent invasion from the north by the Qarakhanids under Elik Khan (Nasr Khan) ends Samanid rule.
- 999: Abdul Malik II As-Samani's name dropped from the address
- 1000: Sistan from Saffarid dynasty
- 1001: Gandhar: Sultan Mahmud defeats Raja Jaypal at Peshawar; Jaypal subsequently abdicates and commits suicide.
- 1002: Seistan: Is imprisoned in Khuluf
- 1004: Bhatia (Bhera) is annexed after it fails to pay its yearly tribute, 1004 CE
- 1005-6: Multan: Fateh Daud, the Ismaili ruler of Multan revolts and enlists the aid of Anandpal. Mahmud massacres the Ismailis of Multan in the course of his conquest. Anandpal is defeated at Peshawar and pursued to Sodra (Wazirabad).
- Ghor and Muhammad ibn Suri are then captured by Mahmud, made prisoner along with Muhammad ibn Suri's son, and taken to Ghazni, where Muhammad ibn Suri dies. Appoints Sewakpal to administer the region. Anandpal flees to Kashmir, fort in the hills on the western border of Kashmir.
- 1005: Defends Balkh and Khorasan against Nasr I of the Kara-Khanid Khanate and recaptures Nishapur from Isma'il Muntasir of the Samanids.
- 1005: Sewakpal rebels and is defeated.
- 1008: Mahmud defeats the Indian Confederacy (Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalinjar, Kannauj, Delhi, and Ajmer) in battle between Und and Peshawar, and captures the Shahi treasury at Kangra, Himachal Pradesh.

Note: A historical narrative states in this battle, under the onslaught of the Gakhars, Mahmud's army was about to retreat when King Anandpal's elephant took flight and turned the tide of the battle.

- 1010: Ghor; against Amir Suri
- 1010: Multan revolts. Abul Fatah Dawood is imprisoned for life at Ghazni.
- 1012-1013: Sacks Thanesar
- 1012: Invades Gharchistan and deposes its ruler Abu Nasr Muhammad.
- 1012: Demands and receives remainder of the province of Khorasan from the Abassid Caliph. Then demands Samarkand as well but is rebuffed.
- 1013: Bulnat: Defeats Trilochanpala.
- 1014: Kafiristan is attacked
- 1015: Mahmud's army sacks Lahore, but his expedition to Kashmir fails, due to inclement weather.
- 1015: Khwarezm: Marries his sister to Abul Abbas Mamun of Khwarezm, who dies in the same year in a rebellion. Moves to quell the rebellion and installs a new ruler and annexes a portion.
- 1017: Kannauj, Meerut, and Muhavun on the Yamuna, Mathura and various other regions along the route. While moving through Kashmir he levies troops from vassal Prince for his onward march; Kannauj and Meerut submit without battle.
- 1018-1020: Sacks the town of Mathura.
- 1021: Raises Ayaz to kingship, awarding him the throne of Lahore
- 1021: Kalinjar attacks Kannauj: he marches to their aid and finds the last Shahi King, Trilochanpaala, encamped as well. No battle, the opponents leave their baggage trains and withdraw from the field. Also fails to take the fort of Lokote again. Takes Lahore on his return. Trilochanpala flees to Ajmer. First Muslim governors appointed east of the Indus River.
- 1023: Lahore. He forces Kalinjar and Gwalior to submit and pay tribute: Trilochanpal, the grandson of Jayapala, is assassinated by his own troops. Official annexation of Punjab by Ghazni. Also fails to take the Lohara fort on the western border of Kashmir for the second time.
- 1024: Ajmer, Nehrwal, Kathiawar: This raid is his last major campaign. The concentration of wealth at Somnath was renowned, and consequently it became an attractive target for Mahmud, as it had previously deterred most invaders. The temple and citadel are sacked, and most of its defenders massacred.

- 1025: Somnath: Mahmud sacks the temple and is reported to have personally hammered the temple's gilded Lingam to pieces, and the stone fragments are carted back to Ghazni, where they are incorporated into the steps of the city's new Jama Masjid (Friday Mosque) in 1026. He places a new king on the throne in Gujarat as a tributary. His return detours across the Thar Desert to avoid the armies of Ajmer and other allies on his return.
- 1025: Marches against the Jats of the Jood mountains who harry his army on its return from the sack of Somnath.
- 1027: Rey, Isfahan, Hamadan from the Buyids Dynasty.
- 1028, 1029: Merv, Nishapur are lost to Seljuq dynasty

Attitude on religion and jihad :



Coins of Mahmud with the Islamic declaration of faith. Obverse legend with the name of the caliph al-Qadir bi-Allah (in the fifth line). Reverse legend: Muhammad Rasul/Allah Yamin al-Daw/la wa-Amin al-Milla/Mahmud.

Under the reign of Mahmud of Ghazni, the region broke away from the Samanid sphere of influence. While he acknowledged the Abbasids as caliph as a matter of form, he was also granted the title Sultan in recognition of his independence.

Following Mahmud's recognition by the Abbasid caliphate in 999, he pledged a jihad and a raid on India every year. In 1005 Mahmud conducted a series of campaigns during which the Ismailis of Multan were massacred.

In the context of his religious policies toward Hindus, modern historians such as Romila Thapar and Richard M. Eaton have commented that his policies were in contrast to his general image in the modern era.

Mahmud used his plundered wealth to finance his armies which included mercenaries. The Indian soldiers, which Romila Thapar presumed to be Hindus, were one of the components of the army with their commander called *sipahsalar*-i-Hinduwan lived in their quarter of Ghazna practicing their own religion. Indian soldiers under their commander Suvendhray remained loyal to Mahmud. They were also used against a Turkic rebel, with the command given to a Hindu named Tilak according to Baihaki.

Mohammad Habib states that there was no imposition of Jizya on "non-Muslims" during the reign of Mahmud of Ghazni nor any mention of "forced conversions":

[H]is (Mahmud's) expeditions against India were not motivated by religion but by love of plunder.

#### Legacy :

Ferdowsi reads the *Shahnameh* to Mahmud of Ghazni (by Vardges Sureniants, 1913)

By the end of his reign, the Ghaznavid Empire extended from Ray in the west to Samarkand in the north-east, and from the Caspian Sea to the Yamuna. Although his raids carried his forces across the Indian subcontinent, only a portion of the Punjab and of Sindh in modern-day Pakistan came under his semi-permanent rule; Kashmir, the Doab, Rajasthan, and Gujarat remained under the control of the local Hindu dynasties.

The booty brought back to Ghazni was enormous, and contemporary historians (e.g. Abolfazl Beyhaghi, Ferdowsi) give descriptions of the magnificence of the capital, as well as of the conqueror's munificent support of literature. He transformed Ghazni, the first centre of Persian literature, into one of the leading cities of Central Asia, patronizing scholars, establishing colleges, laying out gardens, and building mosques, palaces, and caravansaries. Mahmud brought whole libraries from Ray and Isfahan to Ghazni. He even demanded that the Khwarizmshah court send its men of learning to Ghazni.

Mahmud patronized the notable poet Ferdowsi, who after laboring 27 years, went to Ghazni and presented the *Shahnameh* to him. There are various stories in medieval texts describing the lack of interest shown by Mahmud to Ferdowsi and his life's work. According to historians, Mahmud had promised Ferdowsi a dinar for every distich written in the *Shahnameh* (which would have been 60,000 dinars), but later retracted his promise and presented him with dirhams (20,000 dirhams), at that time the equivalent of only 200 dinars. His expedition across the Gangetic plains in 1017 inspired Al-Biruni to compose his *Tarikh Al-Hind* in order to understand the Indians and their beliefs. During Mahmud's rule, universities were founded to study various subjects such as mathematics, religion, the humanities, and medicine.

On 30 April 1030 Sultan Mahmud died in Ghazni at the age of 58. Sultan Mahmud had contracted malaria during his last invasion. The medical complication from malaria had caused lethal tuberculosis.

The Ghaznavid Empire was ruled by his successors for 157 years. The expanding Seljuk empire absorbed most of the Ghaznavid west. The Ghorids captured Ghazni in 1150, and Mu'izz al-



Din (also known as Muhammad of Ghori) captured the last Ghaznavid stronghold at Lahore in 1187.

The military of Pakistan has named its short-range ballistic missile the Ghaznavi Missile in honour of Mahmud of Ghazni. In addition, the Pakistan Military Academy, where cadets are trained to become officers of the Pakistan Army, also gives tribute to Mahmud of Ghazni by naming one of its twelve companies Ghaznavi Company.

Source :

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahmud\\_of\\_Ghazni](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahmud_of_Ghazni)

## 26. Nader Shah :

This article is about the Persian shah. For the 20th-century king of Afghanistan.



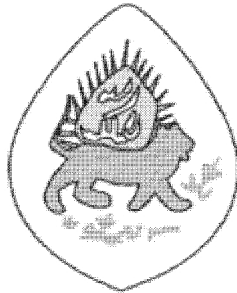
**Portrait of Nader Shah**

**Shah of Persia**

<b>Reign</b>	8 March 1736 – 20 June 1747
<b>Coronation</b>	8 March 1736
<b>Predecessor</b>	Abbas III
<b>Successor</b>	Adil Shah
<b>Born</b>	6 August 1698, or 22 November 1688

	Dargaz, Persia
<b>Died</b>	20 June 1747 (aged 48, or 58) Quchan, Persia
<b>Burial</b>	Mashhad, Iran
<b>Queen and regent</b>	Razia Begum Safavi
<b>Issue</b>	Reza Qoli Mirza Morteza Mirza Imam Qoli Mirza Joseph von Semlin
<b>Dynasty</b>	House of Afshar
<b>Father</b>	Emam Qoli
<b>Religion</b>	Personally irreligious Born Twelver Shia Muslim Officially Ja'fari school of Shia Islam

#### Seal



### Military career

**Battles/wars** Campaigns of Nader Shah

Nader Shah Afshar (Persian: نادر شاه افشار; also known as *Nader Qoli Beyg* نادر قلی بیگ or *Tahmāsp Qoli Khan* تهماسب قلی خان) (August 1688 – 19 June 1747) was one of the most powerful Iranian rulers in the history of the nation, ruling as Shah of Iran (Persia) from 1736 to 1747 when he was assassinated during a rebellion. Because of his military genius as evidenced in his numerous campaigns throughout Middle East, Caucasus, Central and South Asia, such as the battles of Herat, Mihmandust, Murche-Khort, Kirkuk, Yeghevard, Khyber Pass, Karnal and Kars, some historians have described him as the *Napoleon of Persia*, *Sword of Persia*, or the *Second Alexander*. Nader Shah was an Iranian who belonged to the Turkmen Afshar tribe of Khorasan in northeastern Iran, which had supplied military power to the Safavid dynasty since the time of Shah Ismail I.

Nader rose to power during a period of chaos in Iran after a rebellion by the Hotaki Pashtuns had overthrown the weak Shah Sultan Husayn, while the arch-enemy of the Safavids, the Ottomans, as well as the Russians had seized Iranian territory for themselves. Nader reunited the Iranian realm and removed the invaders. He became so powerful that he decided to depose the last members of the Safavid dynasty, which had ruled Iran for over 200 years, and become Shah himself in 1736. His numerous campaigns created a great empire that, at its greatest extent, briefly encompassed what is now part of or includes Iran, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the North Caucasus, Iraq, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Bahrain, Pakistan, Oman and the Persian Gulf, but his military spending had a ruinous effect on the Iranian economy.

Nader idolized Genghis Khan and Timur, the previous conquerors from Central Asia. He imitated their military prowess and—especially later in his reign—their cruelty. His victories during his campaigns briefly made him West Asia's most powerful sovereign, ruling over what was arguably the most powerful empire in the world, but his empire and the Afsharid dynasty he founded quickly disintegrated after he was assassinated in 1747. The turning point in his military career started from his second and third campaigns against the by then revolting Lezgians, as well as other ethnic groups of Dagestan in the northwestern parts of his domain. Nader Shah has been described as "the last great Asiatic military conqueror".

#### Early life :

Nader Shah was born in the fortress of Dastgerd into the Qereqlu clan of the Afshars, a semi-nomadic Turkic Qizilbash pastoralist tribe settled in the northern valleys of Khorasan, a province in the northeast of the Iranian Empire. His father, Emam Qoli, was a herdsman who may also have been a coatmaker. His family lived nomadic way of life. Nader was a long-awaited son in his family.

At the age of 13, his father died and Nader had to find a way to support himself and his mother. He had no source of income other than the sticks he gathered for firewood, which he transported to the market. Many years later, when he was returning in triumph from his conquest of Delhi, he led the army to his birthplace and made a speech to his generals about his early life of deprivation. He said, "You now see to what height it has pleased the Almighty to exalt me; from hence, learn not to despise men of low estate." Nader's early experiences did not, however, make him particularly compassionate toward the poor. Throughout his career, he was only interested in his own advancement. Legend has it that in 1704, when he was about 17, a band of marauding Uzbek Tartars invaded the province of Khorasan, where Nader lived with his mother. They killed many peasants. Nader and his mother were among those who were carried off into slavery. His mother died in captivity. According to another story, Nader managed to convince turkmens promising help in future, Nader returned to the province of Khorasan in 1708.

#### Fall of the Safavid dynasty :

Nader grew up during the final years of the Safavid dynasty which had ruled Iran since 1502. At its peak, under such figures as Abbas the Great, Safavid Iran had been a powerful empire, but by the early 18th century the state was in serious decline and the reigning shah, Sultan Husayn, was a weak ruler. When Sultan Husayn attempted to quell a rebellion by the Ghilzai

Afghans in Kandahar, the governor he sent (Gurgin Khan) was killed. Under their leader Mahmud Hotaki, the rebellious Afghans moved westwards against the shah himself and in 1722 they defeated a force at the Battle of Gulnabad and then besieged the capital, Isfahan. After the Shah failed to escape or to rally a relief force elsewhere, the city was starved into submission and Sultan Husayn abdicated, handing power to Mahmud. In Khorasan, Nader at first submitted to the local Afghan governor of Mashhad, Malek Mahmud, but then rebelled and built up his own small army. Sultan Husayn's son had declared himself Shah Tahmasp II, but found little support and fled to the Qajar tribe, who offered to back him. Meanwhile, Iran's imperial neighboring rivals, the Ottomans and the Russians, took advantage of the chaos in the country to seize and divide territory for themselves. In 1722, Russia, led by Peter the Great and further aided by some of the most notable Caucasian regents of the disintegrating Safavid Empire, such as Vakhtang VI, launched the Russo-Iranian War (1722-1723) in which Russia captured swaths of Iran's territories in the North Caucasus, South Caucasus, as well as in northern mainland Iran. This included mainly, but was not limited to, the losses of Dagestan (including its principal city of Derbent), Baku, Gilan, Mazandaran, and Astrabad. The regions to the west of that, mainly Iranian territories in Georgia, Iranian Azerbaijan, and Armenia, were taken by the Ottomans. The newly gained Russian and Turkish possessions were confirmed and further divided amongst themselves in the Treaty of Constantinople (1724).

#### Fall of the Hotaki dynasty :



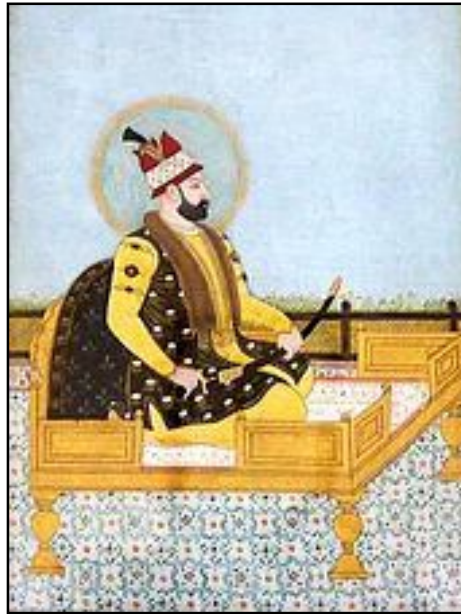
**Statue of Nader Shah at the Naderi Museum**

Tahmasp and the Qajar leader Fath Ali Khan (the ancestor of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar) contacted Nader and asked him to join their cause and drive the Ghilzai Afghans out of Khorasan. He agreed and thus became a figure of national importance. When Nader discovered that Fath Ali Khan was in treacherous correspondence with Malek Mahmud and revealed this to the shah, Tahmasp executed him and made Nader the chief of his army instead. Nader subsequently took on the title Tahmasp Qoli (Servant of Tahmasp). In late 1726, Nader recaptured Mashhad.

Nader chose not to march directly on Isfahan. First, in May 1729, he defeated the Abdali Afghans near Herat. Many of the Abdali Afghans subsequently joined his army. The new shah of the Ghilzai Afghans, Ashraf, decided to move against Nader but in September 1729, Nader defeated him at the Battle of Damghan and again decisively in November at

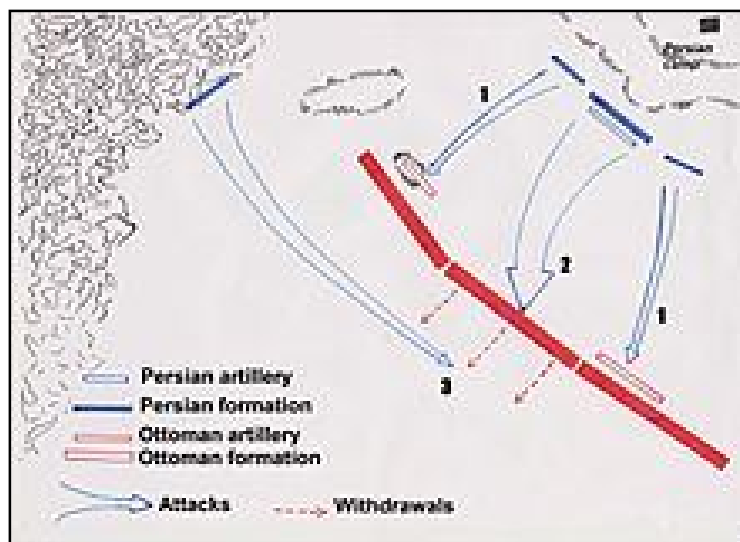
Murchakhort, banishing the Afghans from Iranian soil forever. Ashraf fled and Nader finally entered Isfahan, handing it over to Tahmasp in December. The citizens' rejoicing was cut short when Nader plundered them to pay his army. Tahmasp made Nader governor over many eastern provinces, including his native Khorasan, and married him to his sister. Nader pursued and defeated Ashraf, who was murdered by his own followers. In 1738 Nader Shah besieged and destroyed the last Hotaki seat of power at Kandahar. He built a new city near Kandahar, which he named "Naderabad".

First Ottoman campaign and the regain of the Caucasus :



**Painting of Nader Shah**

In the spring of 1730, Nader attacked Iran's archrival the Ottomans and regained most of the territory lost during the recent chaos. At the same time, the Abdali Afghans rebelled and besieged Mashhad, forcing Nader to suspend his campaign and save his brother, Ebrahim. It took Nader fourteen months to crush this uprising.



The Battle of Yeghevārd was one of Nader's most tactically impressive triumphs in his military career.

Relations between Nader and the Shah had declined as the latter grew jealous of his general's military successes. While Nader was absent in the east, Tahmasp tried to assert himself by launching a foolhardy campaign to recapture Yerevan. He ended up losing all of Nader's recent gains to the Ottomans, and signed a treaty ceding Georgia and Armenia in exchange for Tabriz. Nader, furious, saw that the moment had come to ease Tahmasp from power. He denounced the treaty, seeking popular support for a war against the Ottomans. In Isfahan, Nader got Tahmasp drunk then showed him to the courtiers asking if a man in such a state was fit to rule. In 1732 he forced Tahmasp to abdicate in favour of the Shah's baby son, Abbas III, to whom Nader became regent.

Nader decided, as he continued the 1730-35 war, that he could win back the territory in Armenia and Georgia by seizing Ottoman Baghdad and then offering it in exchange for the lost provinces, but his plan went badly amiss when his army was routed by the Ottoman general Topal Osman Pasha near the city in 1733. This was the only time that he was ever defeated in battle. Nader decided he needed to regain the initiative as soon as possible to save his position because revolts were already breaking out in Iran. He faced Topal again with a larger force and defeated and killed him. He then besieged Baghdad, as well as Ganja in the northern provinces, earning a Russian alliance against the Ottomans. Nader scored a great victory over a superior Ottoman force at Baghavard and by the summer of 1735, Iranian Armenia and Georgia were his again. In March 1735, he signed a treaty with the Russians in Ganja by which the latter agreed to withdraw all of their troops from Iranian territory, those which had not been ceded back by the 1732 Treaty of Resht yet, resulting in the reestablishment of Iranian rule over all of the Caucasus and northern mainland Iran again.

#### Nader becomes Shah of Iran :

Nader suggested to his closest intimates, after a great hunting party on the Moghan plains (presently split between Azerbaijan and Iran), that he should be proclaimed the new king (shah) in place of the young Abbas III. The small group of close intimates, Nader's friends, included Tahmasp Khan Jalayer and Hasan-Ali Beg Bestami. Following Nader's suggestion, the group did not "demur", and Hasan-Ali remained silent. When Nader asked him why he remained silent, Hasan-Ali replied that the best thing for Nader to do would be assembling all leading men of the state, in order to receive their agreement in "a signed and sealed document of consent". Nader approved with the proposal, and the writers of the chancellery, which included the court historian Mirza Mehdi Khan Astarabadi, were instructed with sending out orders to the military, clergy and nobility of the nation to summon at the plains. The summonses for the people to attend had gone out in November 1735, and they began arriving in January 1736. In the same month of January 1736, Nader held a *qoroltai* (a grand meeting in the tradition of Genghis Khan and Timur) on the Moghan plains. The Moghan plain was specifically chosen for its size and "abundance of fodder". Everyone agreed to the proposal of Nader becoming the new king, many—if not most—enthusiastically, the rest fearing Nader's anger if they showed support for the deposed Safavids. Nader was crowned Shah of Iran on March 8, 1736, a date his astrologers had chosen as being especially propitious, in attendance of an "exceptionally large assembly" composed of the military, religious and nobility of the nation, as well as the Ottoman ambassador Ali Pasha.



**Nader Shah and two of his sons**

The Safavids had introduced Shi'a Islam as the state religion of Iran. Nader was probably brought up as a Shi'a but later espoused the Sunni faith as he gained power and began to push into the Ottoman Empire. He believed that Safavid Shi'ism had intensified the conflict with the Sunni Ottoman Empire. His army was a mix of Shi'a and Sunni (with a notable minority of Christians) and included his own Qizilbash as well as Uzbeks, Afghans, Christian Georgians and Armenians, and others. He wanted Iran to adopt a form of religion that would be more acceptable to Sunnis and suggested that Iran adopt a form of Shi'ism he called "Ja'fari", in honour of the sixth Shi'a imam Ja'far al-Sadiq.

He banned certain Shi'a practices which were particularly offensive to Sunnis, such as the cursing of the first three caliphs. Personally, Nader is said to have been indifferent towards religion and the French Jesuit who served as his personal physician reported that it was difficult to know which religion he followed and that many who knew him best said that he had none. Nader hoped that "Ja'farism" would be accepted as a fifth school (*mazhab*) of Sunni Islam and that the Ottomans would allow its adherents to go on the hajj, or pilgrimage, to Mecca, which was within their territory. In the subsequent peace negotiations, the Ottomans refused to acknowledge Ja'farism as a fifth *mazhab* but they did allow Iranian pilgrims to go on the *hajj*. Nader was interested in gaining rights for Iranians to go on the *hajj* in part because of revenues from the pilgrimage trade. Nader's other primary aim in his religious reforms was to weaken the Safavids further since Shi'a Islam had always been a major element in support for the dynasty. He had the chief mullah of Iran strangled after he was heard expressing support for the Safavids. Among his reforms was the introduction of what came to be known as the *kolah-e Naderi*. This was a hat with four peaks which symbolised the first four caliphs.

In 1741, eight Muslim mullahs and three European and five Armenian priests translated the Koran and the Gospels. The commission was supervised by Mīrzā Moḥammad Mahdī Khan Monšī, the court historiographer and author of the *Tarikh-e-Jahangoshay-e-Naderi* (History of Nadir Shah's Wars). Finished translations were presented to Nāder Shah in Qazvīn in June, 1741, who, however, was not impressed.



Invasion of the Mughal Empire :



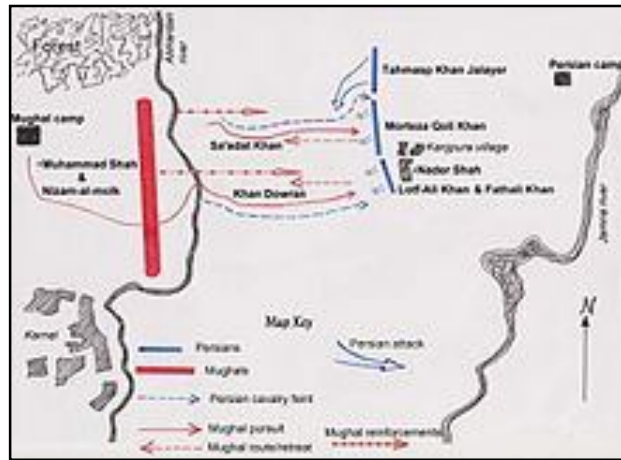
**Afsharid forces negotiate with a Mughal Nawab**



The flank march of Nader's army at Battle of Khyber pass has been called a "military masterpiece" by the Russian general & historian Kishmishev.

In 1738, Nader Shah conquered Kandahar, the last outpost of the Hotaki dynasty. His thoughts now turned to the Mughal Empire based in Delhi. This once powerful Muslim state to the east was falling apart as the nobles became increasingly disobedient and local opponents such as the Sikhs and Hindu Marathas of the Maratha Empire were expanding upon its territory. Its ruler Muhammad Shah was powerless to reverse this disintegration. Nader asked for the Afghan rebels to be handed over, but the Mughal emperor refused. Nader used the pretext of his Afghan enemies taking refuge in India to cross the border and invade the militarily weak but still extremely wealthy far eastern empire, and in a brilliant campaign against the governor of Peshawar he took a small contingent of his forces on a daunting flank march through nearly impassable mountain passes and took the enemy forces positioned at the mouth of the Khyber Pass completely by surprise, utterly beating them despite being outnumbered two-to-one. This led to the capture of Ghazni, Kabul, Peshawar, Sindh and Lahore. As he moved into the Mughal territories, he was loyally accompanied by his Georgian subject and future king of eastern Georgia, Erekle II, who led a Georgian contingent as a military commander as part of Nader's force. Following the prior defeat of Mughal forces, he then advanced deeper into India, crossing

the river Indus before the end of year. The news of the Iranian army's swift and decisive successes against the northern vassal states of the Mughal empire caused much consternation in Delhi, prompting the Mughal ruler, Muhammad Shah, to raise an army of some 300,000 men and march to confront Nader Shah.



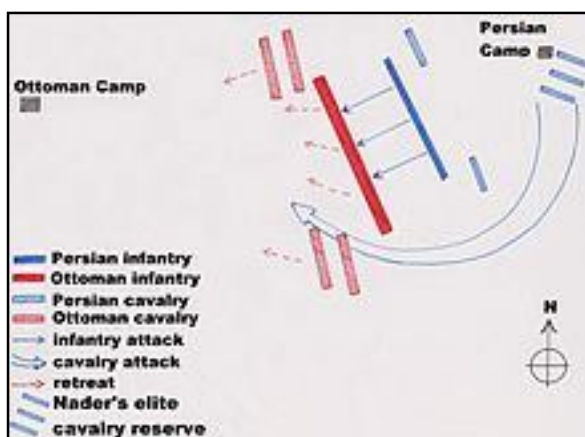
At the Battle of Karnal, Nader crushed an enormous Mughal army six times greater than his own.

Despite being outnumbered by six to one, Nader Shah crushed the Mughal army in less than three hours at the huge Battle of Karnal on 13 February 1739. After this spectacular victory, Nader captured Mohammad Shah and entered Delhi. When a rumour broke out that Nader had been assassinated, some of the Indians attacked and killed Iranian troops; by midday 900 Iranian soldiers had been killed. Nader, furious, reacted by ordering his soldiers to sack the city. During the course of one day (March 22) 20,000 to 30,000 Indians were killed by the Iranian troops and as many as 10,000 women and children were taken as slaves, forcing Mohammad Shah to beg Nader for mercy.

In response, Nader Shah agreed to withdraw, but Mohammad Shah paid the consequence in handing over the keys of his royal treasury, and losing even the fabled Peacock Throne to the Iranian emperor. The Peacock Throne, thereafter, served as a symbol of Iranian imperial might. It is estimated that Nader took away with him treasures worth as much as seven hundred million rupees. Among a trove of other fabulous jewels, Nader also looted the Koh-i-Noor (meaning "Mountain of Light" in Persian) and Darya-ye Noor (meaning "Sea of Light") diamonds. The Iranian troops left Delhi at the beginning of May 1739, but before they left, he ceded back to Muhammad Shah all territories to the east of the Indus which he had overrun. The booty they had collected was loaded on 700 elephants, 4,000 camels, and 12,000 horses. The plunder seized from India was so much that Nader stopped taxation in Iran for a period of three years following his return. Many historians believe that Nader attacked the Mughal Empire to, perhaps, give his country some breathing space after previous turmoils. His successful campaign and replenishment of funds meant that he could continue his wars against Iran's archrival and neighbour, the Ottoman Empire, as well as the campaigns in the North Caucasus. Nader also secured one of the Mughal emperor's daughters, Jahan Afruz Banu Begum, as a bride for his youngest son.



Silver coin of Nader Shah, minted in Dagestan, dated 1741/2 (left = obverse; right = reverse) The Indian campaign was the zenith of Nader's career. Afterwards he became increasingly despotic as his health declined markedly. Nader had left his son Reza Qoli Mirza to rule Iran in his absence. Reza had behaved highhandedly and somewhat cruelly but he had kept the peace in Iran. Having heard rumours that his father had died, he had made preparations for assuming the crown. These included the murder of the former shah Tahmasp and his family, including the nine-year-old Abbas III. On hearing the news, Reza's wife, who was Tahmasp's sister, committed suicide. Nader was not impressed with his son's waywardness and reprimanded him, but he took him on his expedition to conquer territory in Transoxiana. In 1740 he conquered Khanate of Khiva. After the Iranians had forced the Uzbek khanate of Bukhara to submit, Nader wanted Reza to marry the khan's elder daughter because she was a descendant of his hero Genghis Khan, but Reza flatly refused and Nader married the girl himself.



The Battle of Kars (1745) was the last major field battle Nader fought in his spectacular military career.

Nader now decided to punish Daghestan for the death of his brother Ebrahim Qoli on a campaign a few years earlier. In 1741, while Nader was passing through the forest of Mazanderan on his way to fight the Daghestanis, an assassin took a shot at him but Nader was only lightly wounded. He began to suspect his son was behind the attempt and confined him to Tehran. Nader's increasing ill health made his temper ever worse. Perhaps it was his

illness that made Nader lose the initiative in his war against the Lezgin tribes of Daghestan. Frustratingly for him, they resorted to guerrilla warfare and the Iranians could make little headway against them.

Though Nader managed to take most of Dagestan during his campaign, the effective guerrilla warfare as deployed by the Lezgins, but also the Avars and Laks made the Iranian re-conquest of the particular North Caucasian region a short lived one; several years later, Nader was forced to withdraw. During the same period, Nader accused his son of being behind the assassination attempt in Mazandaran. Reza Qoli angrily protested his innocence, but Nader had him blinded as punishment, and ordered his eyes to be brought to him on a platter. When his orders had been carried out, however, Nader instantly regretted it, crying out to his courtiers, "What is a father? What is a son?" Soon afterwards, Nader started executing the nobles who had witnessed his son's blinding. In his last years, Nader became increasingly paranoid, ordering the assassination of large numbers of suspected enemies.

With the wealth he gained, Nader started to build an Iranian navy. With lumber from Mazandaran, he built ships in Bushehr. He also purchased thirty ships in India. He recaptured the island of Bahrain from the Arabs. In 1743, he conquered Oman and its main capital Muscat. In 1743, Nader started another war against the Ottoman Empire. Despite having a huge army at his disposal, in this campaign Nader showed little of his former military brilliance. It ended in 1746 with the signing of a peace treaty, the Treaty of Kerden, in which the Ottomans agreed to let Nader occupy Najaf.

#### Domestic policies :

Nader changed the Iranian coinage system. He minted silver coins, called *Naderi*, that were equal to the Mughal rupee. Nader discontinued the policy of paying soldiers based on land tenure. Like the late Safavids he resettled tribes. Nader Shah transformed the *Shahsevan*, a nomadic group living around Azerbaijan whose name literally means "shah lover", into a tribal confederacy which defended Iran against the neighbouring Ottomans and Russians. In addition, he increased the number of soldiers under his command and reduced the number of soldiers under tribal and provincial control. His reforms may have strengthened the country, but they did little to improve Iran's suffering economy.

Death and legacy :



A Western view of Nader in his later years from a book by Jonas Hanway (1753). The background shows a tower of skulls.



Nader Shah's dagger with a small portion of his jewelry. Now part of the Iranian Crown Jewels. Nader became increasingly cruel as a result of his illness and his desire to extort more and more tax money to pay for his military campaigns. New revolts broke out and Nader crushed them ruthlessly, building towers from his victims' skulls in imitation of his hero Timur.

In 1747, Nader set off for Khorasan, where he intended to punish Kurdish rebels. Some of his officers and courtiers feared he was about to execute them and plotted against him, including two of his relatives: Muhammad Quli Khan, the captain of the guards, and Salah Khan, the overseer of Nader's household.

Nader Shah was assassinated on 20 June 1747, at Quchan in Khorasan. He was surprised in his sleep by around fifteen conspirators, and stabbed to death. Nader was able to kill two of the assassins before he died.

The most detailed account of Nader's assassination comes from Père Louis Bazin, Nader's physician at the time of his death, who relied on the eyewitness testimony of Chuki, one of Nader's favourite concubines:

Around fifteen of the conspirators were impatient or merely eager to distinguish themselves, and so turned up prematurely at the agreed meeting place. They entered the enclosure of the royal tent, pushing and smashing their way through any obstacles, and penetrated into the sleeping quarters of that ill-starred monarch. The noise they made on entering woke him up: 'Who goes there?' he shouted out in a roar. 'Where is my sword? Bring me my weapons!' The assassins were struck with fear by these words and wanted to escape, but ran straight into the two chiefs of the murder-conspiracy, who allayed their fears and made them go into the tent again. Nader Shah had not yet had time to get dressed; Muhammad Quli Khan ran in first and struck him with a great blow of his sword which felled him to the ground; two or three others followed suit; the wretched monarch, covered in his own blood, attempted – but was too weak – to get up, and cried out, 'Why do you want to kill me? Spare my life and all I have shall be yours!' He was still pleading when Salah Khan ran up, sword in hand and severed his head, which he dropped into the hands of a waiting soldier. Thus perished the wealthiest monarch on earth.

After his death, he was succeeded by his nephew Ali Qoli, who renamed himself Adil Shah ("righteous king"). Adil Shah was probably involved in the assassination plot. Adil Shah was deposed within a year. During the struggle between Adil Shah, his brother Ibrahim Khan and Nader's grandson Shah Rukh and almost all provincial governors declared independence, established their own states, and the entire Empire of Nader Shah fell into anarchy. Oman and the Uzbek khanates of Bukhara and Khiva regained independence, while the Ottoman Empire regained the lost territories in Western Armenia and Mesopotamia. Finally, Karim Khan founded the Zand dynasty and became ruler of Iran by 1760. Erekle II and Teimuraz II, who, in 1744, had been made the kings of Kakheti and Kartli respectively by Nader himself for their loyal service, capitalized on the eruption of instability, and declared *de facto* independence. Erekle II assumed control over Kartli after Teimuraz II's death, thus unifying the two as the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti, becoming the first Georgian ruler in three centuries to preside over a politically unified eastern Georgia, and due to the frantic turn of events in mainland Iran he would be able to maintain its autonomy until the advent of the Iranian Qajar dynasty. The rest of the Iranian territories in the Caucasus, comprising modern-day Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Dagestan broke away into various khanates. Until the advent of the Zands and Qajars, its rulers had various forms of autonomy, but stayed vassals and subjects to the Iranian king. In the far east, Ahmad Shah Durrani had already proclaimed independence, marking the foundation of modern Afghanistan. Iran finally lost Bahrain to House of Khalifa during Invasion of Bani Utbah in 1783.

Nader Shah was well known to the European public of the time. In 1768, Christian VII of Denmark commissioned Sir William Jones to translate a Persian language biography of Nader Shah written by his Minister Mirza Mehdi Khan Astarabadi into French. It was published in 1770 as *Histoire de Nadir Chah*. Nader's Indian campaign alerted the British East India Company to the extreme weakness of the Mughal Empire and the possibility of expanding to fill the power vacuum. Without Nader, "eventual British [in India] would have come later and in a different form, perhaps never at all - with important global effects".



Source :

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nader\\_Shah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nader_Shah)

## **27. Iraq's 3,400 year old palace :**

Iraq's drought unveils 3,400-year-old palace of mysterious empire :

Receding waters in the Mosul Dam reservoir have unveiled "one of the most important archaeological discoveries in the region." Researchers said the Mittani Empire is one of the least understood ancient civilizations.



A team of German and Kurdish archaeologists have discovered a 3,400-year-old palace that belonged to the mysterious Mittani Empire, the University of Tübingen announced on Thursday. The discovery was only made possible by a drought that significantly reduced water levels in the Mosul Dam reservoir.

"The find is one of the most important archaeological discoveries in the region in recent decades and illustrates the success of the Kurdish-German cooperation," said Hasan Ahmed Qasim, a Kurdish archaeologist of the Duhok Directorate of Antiquities who worked on the site.

Shrouded in mystery :

Last year, the team of archaeologists launched an emergency rescue evacuation of the ruins when receding waters revealed them on the ancient banks of the Tigris. The ruins are part of only a handful discovered from the Mittani Empire.

"The Mittani Empire is one of the least researched empires of the Ancient Near East," said archaeologist Ivana Puljiz of the University of Tübingen. "Even the capital of the Mittani Empire has not been identified."



Very little is known about the Mittani Empire.

'Archaeological sensation' :

The team had little time to spare as water levels continued to rise, eventually submerging the ruins again. At least 10 cuneiform clay tablets were discovered inside the palace.

"We also found remains of wall paintings in bright shades of red and blue," Puljiz said. "In the second millennium BCE, murals were probably a typical feature of palaces in the Ancient Near East, but we rarely find them preserved. Discovering wall paintings in Kemune is an archaeological sensation."

A team of researchers in Germany will now try to interpret the cuneiform tablets. They hope that the clay tablets will reveal more about the Mittani Empire, which once dominated life in parts of Syria and northern Mesopotamia.

Source :

<https://www.dw.com/en/iraqs-drought-unveils-3400-year-old-palace-of-mysterious-empire/a-49384876>



## 28. Vassal and tributary states of the Ottoman Empire :

Vassal States were a number of tributary or vassal states, usually on the periphery of the Ottoman Empire under suzerainty of the Porte, over which direct control was not established, for various reasons.

### Functions :

Some of these states served as buffer states between the Ottomans and Christianity in Europe or Shi'ism in Asia. Their number varied over time but notable were the Khanate of Crimea, Wallachia, Moldavia, Transylvania and the Principality of Serbia from 1815 until its full independence half of century later. Other states such as Bulgaria, the Eastern Hungarian Kingdom, the Serbian Despotate and the Kingdom of Bosnia were vassals before being absorbed entirely or partially into the Empire. Still others had commercial value such as Imeretia, Mingrelia, Chios, the Duchy of Naxos, and the Republic of Ragusa (Dubrovnik). Areas such as holy cities and Venetian tributary areas of Cyprus and Zante were not fully incorporated either. Finally, some small areas such as Montenegro/Zeta and Mount Lebanon did not merit the effort of conquest and were not fully subordinated to the Empire.

### Forms :

Some states within the eyalet system included sancakbeys who were local to their sanjak or who inherited their position (e.g., Samtskhe, some Kurdish sanjaks), areas that were permitted to elect their own leaders (e.g., areas of Albania, Epirus, and Morea (Mani Peninsula was nominally a part of Aegean Islands Province but Maniot *beys* were tributary vassals of the Porte.)), or *de facto* independent eyalets (e.g., the Barbaresque 'regencies' Algiers, Tunis, Tripolitania in the Maghreb, and later the Khedivate of Egypt).

Outside the eyalet system were states such as Moldavia, Wallachia and Transylvania which paid tribute to the Ottomans and over which the Porte had the right to nominate or depose the ruler, garrison rights, and foreign policy control. They were considered by the Ottomans as part of Dar al-'Ahd, thus they were allowed to preserve their self-rule, and were not under Islamic law, like the empire proper; Ottoman subjects, or Muslims for that matter, were not allowed to settle the land permanently or to build mosques.

Some states such as Ragusa paid tribute for the entirety of their territory and recognized Ottoman suzerainty.

Others, such as the Sharif of Mecca, recognized Ottoman suzerainty but were subsidized by the Porte. The Ottomans were also expected to protect the Sharifate militarily - as suzerains over Mecca and Medina, the Ottoman sultans were meant to ensure the protection of the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages and safe passage of pilgrims. The Amir al-Hajj was a military officer appointed by the Sultanate to ensure this.

During the nineteenth century, as Ottoman territory receded, several breakaway states from the Ottoman Empire had the status of vassal states (e.g. they paid tribute to the Ottoman Empire), before gaining complete independence. They were however *de facto* independent,

including having their own foreign policy and their own independent military. This was the case with the principalities of Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria.

Some states paid tribute for possessions that were legally bound to the Ottoman Empire but not possessed by the Ottomans such as the Habsburgs for parts of Royal Hungary or Venice for Zante.

There were also secondary vassals such as the Nogai Horde and the Circassians who were (at least nominally) vassals of the khans of Crimea, or some Berbers and Arabs who paid tribute to the North African beylerbeyis, who were in turn Ottoman vassals themselves.

Source :

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vassal\\_and\\_tributary\\_states\\_of\\_the\\_Ottoman\\_Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vassal_and_tributary_states_of_the_Ottoman_Empire)

## **29. History of Iran - 1 :**

- Sasanian Empire 224 - 651 (500 to 625 AD),
- Rule of the rightly guided Caliphs 642 - 661 (625 to 750 AD),
- Umayyad rule 661 - 750 (625 to 750 AD),
- Abbasid rule 750 - 820 (750 to 875 AD),
- Tahirid dynasty 820 - 873 (875 to 1000 AD),
- Saffarid dynasty 873 - 900 (875 to 1000 AD),
- Samanid dynasty (khorasan), ca. 900 - 1000 (875 to 1000 AD) and,
- Buyid rule 945 - 1055 (875 to 1000 AD).

Overview :

In the sixth and early seventh centuries, Iran continues to be integral to the Sasanian empire. Sasanian power, however, comes to an end with the introduction of Islam in the seventh century by Arab conquerors. Iran becomes a province of the great Umayyad and Abbasid Islamic empires. While Sasanian traditions are felt in the early Islamic period, artistic impulses from capital cities further west (Damascus, Baghdad, and Samarra) become important. Along with the rise of local dynasties in the ninth century, these influences help establish a rich and diverse artistic expression that is distinctly Islamic and Iranian.

## Key Events :

### 531–579 :

Khusrau I, called Anushirvan (r. 531–79), initially makes peace with the Byzantine empire and introduces a number of reforms. New forms of land survey and taxation stimulate the economy. Khusrau protects the frontiers of his empire by dividing it into four military zones, each commanded by one general.

### 540 :

Khusrau briefly captures Antioch from the Byzantine empire in the west while, in the east, he crushes the nomadic Hephthalite Huns. The Byzantine chronicler Procopius records the conflict with Byzantium, which lasts some twenty years. Near Ctesiphon in central Mesopotamia, Khusrau builds a new city called Veh az Antiok Khusrau (Better than Antioch Khusrau). The royal seal of Khusrau bears the image of a wild boar. This popular and widespread symbol in Sasanian art appears in stucco friezes, stone reliefs, and royal silver plates.

### 634–644 :

During the reign of the Rightly Guided Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, Arab armies under the banner of Islam defeat Sasanian forces at the battle of Nahavand (642), marking the de facto end of the Sasanian empire. The last Sasanian ruler, Yazdgerd III, flees to Merv, where he dies in 651. The influence of Sasanian art and architecture is strongly felt in the early Islamic period in Iran.

### 750–820 :

With the shift of the seat of power to Baghdad under the Abbasids, Iran is in close contact with the center of Islamic civilization. Persian bureaucrats gain key positions in the Abbasid hierarchy. Artistic impulses emanating from Baghdad and Samarra are felt even in the remotest Iranian provinces.

### ca. 750–900 :

Congregational mosques in the Abbasid style are built in various Iranian cities. Surviving examples include the mosques of Damghan, Fahraj, Isfahan, and Siraf.

### ca. 800–1000 :

As the Abbasid caliphate centered in Baghdad begins to disintegrate, several Iranian dynasties such as the Tahirids, Saffarids, Samanids, and Buyids gain power in the eastern Islamic provinces, leaving Abbasid political power effectively limited to Iraq. Until the end of the tenth century, these dynasties prevent a large-scale migration of Turkic nomads from the Central Asian steppe.

ca. 900–1000 :

The Samanids establish autonomous control in the Khurasan region and rule quite independently from Nishapur, their provincial capital in eastern Iran. The age of the Samanids marks a renaissance of Iranian culture in which their court is associated with the rise of Persian literature. Various pre-Islamic traditions are revived and integrated into the Islamic artistic language. In this way, a symbiosis emerges from the two trends of pan-Islamic Arabic and Iranian traditions. This cultural blend continues for several centuries until the social, ethnic, and political structure of the region is modified by the input of Turkic populations. New congregational mosques are built and older ones renewed and enlarged in order to serve the growing Muslim community. The mosques of Nayin (960), Niriz (973), and Isfahan (Buyid enlargement, 985–1040) are among the few surviving examples.

ca. 900–1100 :

Particularly fine ceramics, metalwork, and relief-cut glass are produced in Iran. Artists in Nishapur develop very distinctive ceramics in which slip painting beneath a transparent glaze produces a durable surface on earthenware pottery and allows for much creativity.

945 :

The forces of the Iranian Buyid dynasty, supporters of Shi'a Islam, enter Baghdad and take control of the weakened Abbasid caliphate. From this point onward, until the formal end of the dynasty in 1258, the influence of the Abbasid caliphs is limited to the moral and spiritual spheres, as the heads of Orthodox Sunni Islam.

Citation :

"Iran, 500–1000 A.D." In Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–. <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/ht/?period=06&region=wai> (October 2001).

Source :

<https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/ht/06/wai.html>

### 30. History of Iran - 2 :



The history of Iran, which was commonly known until the mid-20th century as Persia in the Western world, is intertwined with the history of a larger region, also to an extent known as Greater Iran, comprising the area from Anatolia, the Bosphorus, and Egypt in the west to the borders of Ancient India and the Syr Darya in the east, and from the Caucasus and the Eurasian Steppe in the north to the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman in the south.

Iran is home to one of the world's oldest continuous major civilizations, with historical and urban settlements dating back to 7000 BC. The south-western and western part of the Iranian Plateau participated in the traditional Ancient Near East with Elam, from the Early Bronze Age, and later with various other peoples, such as the Kassites, Mannaeans, and Gutians. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel calls the Persians the "first Historical People". The Medes unified Iran as a nation and empire in 625 BC. The Achaemenid Empire (550–330 BC), founded by Cyrus the Great, was the first true global superpower state and it ruled from the Balkans to North Africa and also Central Asia, spanning three continents, from their seat of power in Persis (Persepolis). It was the largest empire yet seen and the first world empire. The Achaemenid Empire was the only civilization in all of history to connect over 40% of the global population, accounting for approximately 49.4 million of the world's 112.4 million people in around 480 BC. They were succeeded by the Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanian Empires, who successively governed Iran for almost 1,000 years and made Iran once again as a leading power in the world. Persia's arch-rival was the Roman Empire and its successor, the Byzantine Empire.

The Iranian Empire proper begins in the Iron Age, following the influx of Iranian peoples. Iranian people gave rise to the Medes, the Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sasanian Empires of classical antiquity.

Once a major empire, Iran has endured invasions too, by the Greeks, Arabs, Turks, and the Mongols. Iran has continually reasserted its national identity throughout the centuries and has developed as a distinct political and cultural entity.

The Muslim conquest of Persia (633–654) ended the Sasanian Empire and is a turning point in Iranian history. Islamization of Iran took place during the eighth to tenth centuries, leading to the eventual decline of Zoroastrianism in Iran as well as many of its dependencies. However, the achievements of the previous Persian civilizations were not lost, but were to a great extent absorbed by the new Islamic polity and civilization.

Iran, with its long history of early cultures and empires, had suffered particularly hard during the late Middle Ages and the early modern period. Many invasions of nomadic tribes, whose leaders became rulers in this country, affected it negatively.

Iran was reunified as an independent state in 1501 by the Safavid dynasty, which set Shia Islam as the empire's official religion, marking one of the most important turning points in the history of Islam. Functioning again as a leading world power, this time amongst the neighboring Ottoman Empire, its arch-rival for centuries, Iran had been a monarchy ruled by an emperor almost without interruption from 1501 until the 1979 Iranian Revolution, when Iran officially became an Islamic republic on April 1, 1979.

Over the course of the first half of the 19th century, Iran lost many of its territories in the Caucasus, which had been a part of Iran for centuries, comprising modern-day Eastern Georgia, Dagestan, Republic of Azerbaijan, and Armenia, to its rapidly expanding and emerged neighboring rival, the Russian Empire, following the Russo-Persian Wars between 1804–13 and 1826–8.

Source :

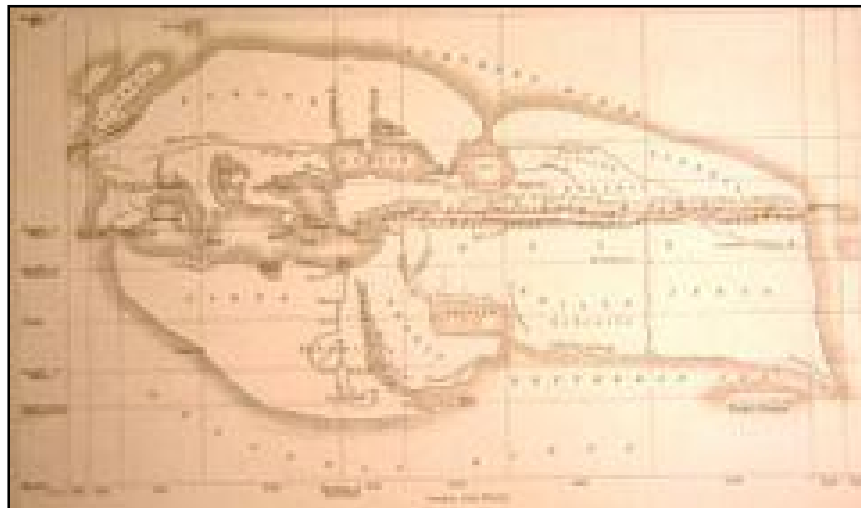
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Iran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Iran)

### 31. Iran - 1 :

Iran ( Persian: ایران , *Īrān*), officially the Islamic Republic of Iran ( Persian: جمهوری اسلامی ایران , transliteration: *Jomhūrī-ye Eslāmī-ye Īrān*), and formerly known as Persia in the West, is a southwest Asian country located in the Middle East. Iran borders Armenia, Azerbaijan (including its Nakhichevan exclave) and Turkmenistan to the north, Pakistan and Afghanistan to the east, and Turkey and Iraq to the west. In addition, it borders the Persian Gulf, across which lie Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Shi'a Islam is the official state religion and Persian the official language.

Throughout history, Iran has been of great geostrategic importance because of its central location in Eurasia. Iran is a member and co-founder of the United Nations, NAM, the OIC, and OPEC. Iran is also significant in international politics on account of its large supply of petroleum. The name Iran is a cognate of Aryan and literally means "Land of the Aryans."

Name :



In antiquity, the names Ariana (*Āryānā*) and Persis were used to describe the region where modern-day Iran is found.

In former ages, the names *Āryānā* and Persis were used to describe the region which is today known as the Iranian plateau. The earliest Iranian reference to the word (*airya/arya/aryana* etc), however, predates the Iranian prophet Zoroaster (est. anywhere between 1200 to 1800 BCE, according to Greek sources, as early as 6000 BCE and is attested in non-Gathic Avestan; it appears as *airya*, meaning noble/spiritual/elevated; as *airya dainhava* (Yt.8.36, 52) meaning the land of the Aryans; and as *airyana vaejah*, the original land of the Aryans.

During the Achaemenid dynasty (550-330 BCE), the Persian people called their provincial homeland *Pārsa*, the Old Persian name for Cyrus the Great's kingdom which belonged to the Persian tribe of the Iranian branch of the Indo-Iranians and which can still be found in the term *Pars* or *Fars* as part of the heartland of Iran and for example in the map by Eratosthenes and other historical or modern maps.



### Stonecarving from Persepolis showing Darius I the Great of Persia (521-486 BC)

However, the country as a whole was called *Aryanam*. The word *Ariya*, noble/spiritual/elevated, is attested in the Inscriptions of Darius the Great and his son, Xerxes I; it is used both as a linguistic and a racial designation as Darius refers to this at the Behistun inscription (DBiv.89), which is written in Aryan language/*airyan*, also known as Old Persian. Both Darius and Xerxes state in Naqsh-e Rostam (DNa.14), Susa (DSe.13), and Persepolis (XPh.13):

*Adam Pārsa, Pārsahyā puça; Ariya, Ariya ciça...*  
"I am Persian, son of a Persian; an Aryan, having Aryan lineage."

In Parthian times (248 BCE – 224 CE), *Aryanam* was modified to *Aryan*. In the early Sassanid Period (224–651 CE), it had already evolved to Middle Persian *Ērān* or *Ērān Shahr* which finally resulted in New Persian *Iran* or *Iran Shahr*.

At the time of the Achaemenian empire, the Greeks called the country *Persis*, the Greek name for Pars (Fars), the central region where the empire was founded; this passed into Latin and became *Persia*, the name widely used in Western countries which causes confusion as *Persia* is actually Pars (Fars) province.

In the twentieth century, a dispute arose over whether *Iran* or *Persia* is the correct name for the country. On 21 March 1935, the ruler of the country, Reza Shah Pahlavi, issued a decree asking foreign delegates to use the term *Iran* in formal correspondence in accordance with the fact that "Persia" was a term used for a country called "Iran" in Persian. Opponents claimed that this act brought cultural damage to the country and separated Iran from its past in the West. The 1979 Revolution led to the establishment of the present day theocracy that is officially called the *Islamic Republic of Iran*, but the noun *Persia* and the adjective *Persian* are still commonly used.



## History :

A new Iranian Empire: Parthian Empire

The Arg-e Bam citadel, built before 500 BC.

Parthia was led by the Arsacid dynasty, who reunited and ruled over the Iranian plateau, taking over the eastern provinces of the Greek Seleucid Empire, beginning in the late 3rd century BCE, and intermittently controlled Mesopotamia between ca 150 BCE and 224 CE. It was the second native dynasty of ancient Iran ( Persia). Parthia (mostly due to their invention of heavy cavalry) was the arch-enemy of the Roman Empire in the east; and it limited Rome's expansion beyond Cappadocia (central Anatolia).

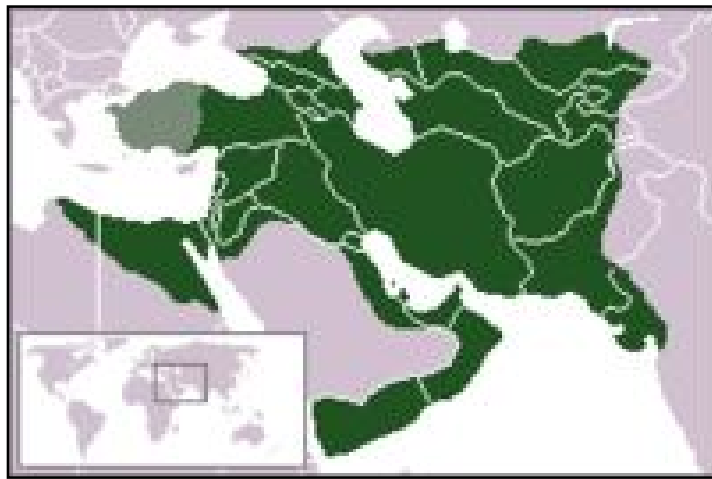
The Parthian armies included two types of cavalry: the heavily-armed and armoured cataphracts and lightly armed but highly-mobile mounted archers. For the Romans, who relied on heavy infantry, the Parthians were too hard to defeat, as both types of cavalry were much faster and more mobile than foot soldiers. On the other hand, the Parthians found it difficult to occupy conquered areas as they were unskilled in siege warfare. Because of these weaknesses, neither the Romans nor the Parthians were able to completely annex each other.

The Parthian empire lasted five centuries, longer than most Eastern Empires. The end of this long lasted empire came in 224 CE, when the empire was loosely organized and the last king was defeated by one of the empire's vassals, the Persians of the Sassanian dynasty.

Zoroastrianism and Second Persian Empire: Sassanian Empire



**The 2500 year old ruins of Persepolis (Old Persian: *Parsa'*; New Persian: Takht-e Jamshid)**



**The Sassanian Empire in 602-629 AD (green) and areas under Sassanid military control (striped)**

Before the Islamic conquest of Persia, Zoroastrianism was the national religion of the Sassanian Empire of Persia, and played an important role in the earlier Achaemenian and Parthian dynasties. The Iranian Prophet Zoroaster is considered by numerous scholars as the founder of the earliest religion based on revealed scripture. Many scholars point out that Judaism and subsequently, Christianity and Islam have borrowed from Zoroastrianism in regards to the concepts of Eschatology, Angelology and Demonology, as well as the fallen angel Satan, as the ultimate agent of evil; some suggest it might have been a process of mutual influencing. Zoroastrian monotheism has had major influence on the religions of the Middle Eastern monotheisms in adaptations of such concepts as heavens, hells, judgment day and messianic figures. These concepts (amongst many others) reflect the extreme dualism of Persian culture which has influenced Eastern and Western civilization. According to Professor Mary Boyce, who was the world's leading doyenne of Zoroastrian studies and Iranology, Zoroastrianism is the oldest of the revealed credal religions, and it has probably had more influence on mankind, directly and indirectly, than any other single faith. Nonetheless, claims of Zoroastrianism influencing ancient Jewish (and subsequent Christian) thought are disputed by other scholars or explained by the mutual influencing phenomenon.

Despite its heavy persecution of Christians during the fourth century, fifth century Zoroastrian Iran became a haven for Nestorians fleeing Christian territories that supported the Council of Ephesus. As a result, the Assyrian Church of the East was formed.

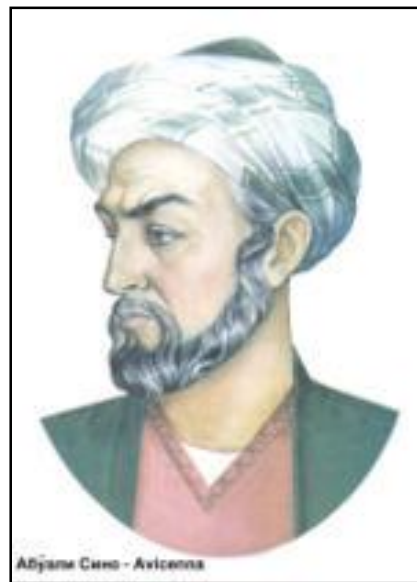
The first Shah of the Sassanian Empire, Ardashir I, started reforming the country both economically and militarily. The empire's territory encompassed all of today's Iran, Iraq, Armenia, Afghanistan, eastern parts of Turkey, and parts of Syria, Pakistan, Caucasia, Central Asia and Arabia. During Khosrau II's rule in 590-628, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon were also annexed to the Empire. The Sassanians called their empire *Erānshahr* (or *Iranshæhr*, "Dominion of the Aryans", i.e. of Iranians).

An interesting chapter of Iran's history followed after roughly six hundred years of conflict with the Roman Empire. According to historians, the war-exhausted Persians lost the Battle of al-Qādisiyyah (632 CE) in Hilla, (present day Iraq). The Persian general Rostam Farrokhzād had been criticised for his decision to face the Arabs on their own ground, suggesting that the

Persians could have prevailed if they had stayed on the opposite bank of the Euphrates. The first day of battle ended with Persian advances and the Arab force appeared as though it would succumb to the much larger Sassanian army. In particular, the latter's elephants terrified the Arab cavalry. By the third day of battle, Arab veterans arrived on the scene and re-enforced the Arab army. In addition a clever trick whereby the Arab horses were decorated in costume succeeded in frightening the Persian elephants. When an Arab warrior succeeded in slaying the lead elephant, the rest fled into the rear, trampelling numerous Persian fighters. At dawn of the fourth day, a sandstorm broke out blowing sand in the Persian army's faces resulting in total disarray for the Sassanian army and paving way for the Islamic conquest of Persia.

The Sassanian era, encompassing the length of the Late Antiquity period, is considered to be one of the most important and influential historical periods in Iran, and had a major impact on the world. In many ways the Sassanian period witnessed the highest achievement of Persian civilization, and constituted the last great Iranian Empire before the adoption of Islam. Persia influenced Roman civilisation considerably during the Sassanians times; their cultural influence extending far beyond the empire's territorial borders, reaching as far as Western Europe, Africa, China and India and also playing a prominent role in the formation of both European and Asiatic medieval art. This influence carried forward to the early Islamic world. The dynasty's unique and aristocratic culture transformed the Islamic conquest and destruction of Iran into a Persian Renaissance. Much of what later became known as Islamic culture, architecture, writing and other skills, were taken from the Sassanian Persians into the broader Muslim world.

#### Islamic Persia and Islamic Golden Age of Persia :



**Avicenna (Ibn-Sina) is considered the greatest of the medieval Islamic and Persian physicians. His work directly influenced the Renaissance**



### **Ali Qapu palace, the celebrated seat of the Safavid in Isfahan, Iran**

After the conquest Persians began to look for ways in which they could remain Muslim but also define themselves as Persians and sought the "Persianisation" of Islam. In the 8 CE (2 H) they helped the Abbassids to overthrow the Umayyad Dynasty, an Arab-oriented regime that was largely disdainful towards Persians and Persian culture. Under the Abbassids, Persians (and other non-Arabs) began to take on a more meaningful role in the Islamic Empire's intellectual, cultural, and political realms. Persians entered the Abbassid government as ministers, among those were the Barmakids. They established new dynasties in some parts of Iran, which derived legitimacy from the caliphs. Tahirid dynasty and Samanid dynasty were among those. One of these dynasties (Buwayhid) also conquered Baghdad.

Also a cultural movement emerged during the ninth and tenth centuries. There was a resurgence of Persian national identity. It was not against Islamic identity but against Arabization of Islam and Muslims. The most notable effect of the movement was the decision of the continuation of the Persian language, the language of the Persians to the present day. Ferdowsi, Iran's greatest epic poet, is regarded today as the most important person in maintaining the Persian language.

During this period, Persia and Persian scientists created an Islamic Golden Age (see List of Iranian scientists and scholars). Persia was at this point of history a world centre of scientific inquiry, with philosophers, scientists, engineers and historians contributing enormously to technology, science and medicine, later influencing the rise of European science in the Renaissance. The late Middle Ages however brought many critical events in the region. From 1220, Persia was again invaded and destroyed by wave after wave of calamity starting with the Mongol invasion, followed later by Tamerlane. During the Mongol period more than half of the population were killed and didn't reach its pre-Mongol levels until the twentieth century. Safavid Empire, Shi'a Islam and modern Iran

Persia's first encompassing Shi'a Islamic state was established under the Safavid dynasty in 1501. The Safavid dynasty soon became a major power in the world and started the promotion of tourism in Iran. Under their rule the Persian Architecture flowered again and saw many new monuments. The decline of the Safavid state in the seventeenth century increasingly turned Persia into an arena for rising rival colonial powers such as Imperial Russia and the British Empire that wielded great political influence in Tehran under the Qajarid dynasty. Iran however, managed to maintain its sovereignty and was never colonized, making it unique in the region. With the rise of modernization in the late nineteenth century, desire for change led to the Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911. In 1921, Reza Khan (known as Reza Shah after assuming the throne) staged a coup against the weakened Qajar dynasty. A

supporter of modernization, Reza Shah initiated the development of modern industry, railroads, and establishment of a national education system, but his autocratic rule and unbalanced social reforms created discontent among many Iranians.



### **Eram Garden, a famous historic garden built in Shiraz during the Qajar era**

During World War II, Britain and the USSR invaded Iran from August 25 to September 17, 1941, to stop an Axis-supported coup and secure Iran's petroleum infrastructure. The Allies forced the Shah to abdicate in favour of his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, whom they hoped would be more supportive. In 1951, an eccentric pro-democratic nationalist, Dr. Mohammed Mossadegh rose to prominence in Iran and was elected its first Prime Minister. As Prime Minister, Mossadegh alarmed the West by his nationalization of Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (later British Petroleum, BP) that had controlled the country's oil reserves. In response, Britain immediately embargoed Iran. In 1953, members of the British Intelligence Service invited the United States under President Eisenhower to join them in Operation Ajax to overthrow Iran's democracy. President Eisenhower agreed, authorizing the CIA to take the lead in the operation of overthrowing Mossadegh and reinstalling a US-friendly monarch. The CIA faced many setbacks, but eventually succeeded.



**Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh founder of Iran's first democratic government,  
overthrown in a CIA-backed coup in 1953**

Regardless of this setback, the covert operation soon went into full swing, conducted from the US Embassy in Tehran under the leadership of Kermit Roosevelt, Jr.. Agents were hired to facilitate violence; and, as a result, protests broke out across the nation. Anti- and pro-monarchy protestors violently clashed in the streets, leaving almost three hundred dead. The operation was successful in triggering a coup, and within days, pro-Shah tanks stormed the capital and bombarded the Prime Minister's residence. Mossadegh surrendered, and was arrested on 19 August 1953. He was tried for treason, and sentenced to three years in prison.



**Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the last Shah of the Iranian Monarchy, crowning Farah Pahlavi as Empress of Iran**

Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was then reinstated as Shah. His rule became increasingly autocratic in the following years. With strong support from the US and UK, the Shah further modernized Iranian industry, but simultaneously crushed all forms of political opposition with his intelligence agency, SAVAK. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini became an active critic of the Shah's modernization efforts and publicly denounced the government. Khomeini, who was popular in religious circles, was arrested and imprisoned for 18 months. After his release in 1964, Khomeini publicly criticized the United States government. The Shah was persuaded to send him into exile by General Hassan Pakravan. Khomeini was sent first to Turkey and then to Iraq. While in exile, he continued to denounce the Shah. The Islamic Revolution and contemporary Iran.

1979 saw an increase in protests against the Shah, culminating in the Iranian Revolution. The Shah fled the country again, after which Khomeini returned from exile in France on February 1, 1979 and eventually succeeded in taking power. On February 11, Khomeini declared a provisional government led by prime minister Mehdi Bazargan and on March 30 to March 31, asked all Iranians sixteen years of age and older, male and female, to vote in a referendum on the question of establishing an Islamic republic in Iran. Over 98% voted in favour of replacing the monarchy with the newly-proposed form of government. Khomeini's new Islamic state instated conservative Islamic laws and unprecedented levels of direct clerical rule.

Iran's relations with the United States were severely strained after the revolution, especially when Iranian students seized US embassy personnel on November 4, 1979, labeling the embassy a "den of spies" and accused its personnel of being CIA agents trying to overthrow the revolutionary government, as the CIA had done to Mohammad Mossadegh in 1953. Khomeini did not stop the students from holding embassy employees hostage and instead supported the embassy take over, a move which only increased his popularity among the

revolutionaries. Women, African Americans and one hostage diagnosed with multiple sclerosis were soon released.

Despite attempts made by the administration of US President Jimmy Carter at negotiating and rescuing the remaining hostages through such methods as Operation Eagle Claw, Iran refused to release them and threatened to put the hostages on trial for espionage. The students demanded the handover of the shah in exchange for the hostages. However, this exchange never took place, and after 444 days of captivity, embassy employees were finally allowed to leave Iran and return to the United States on the basis of Algiers declaration in which U.S. hasn't released the properties of Iran.

Meanwhile, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein decided to take advantage of what he perceived to be disorder in the wake of the Iranian Revolution and its unpopularity with Western governments. Of particular interest was that the once-strong Iranian military had been disbanded during the revolution. With the Shah out of power, Hussein had far-reaching ambitions to assert himself as the new strong man of the Middle East and planned a full-scale invasion of Iran, boasting that his forces could reach the capital within three days. The Iraqi army's assault took the country completely by surprise and the destructive Iran-Iraq War called "Saddām's al-Qādisiyyah" in Iraq, and the "Imposed war" in Iran had begun.

Tens of thousands of Iranian civilians and military personnel were killed when Iraq used chemical weapons in its warfare. Iraq was financially backed by Egypt, the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, the United States (beginning in 1983), France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and the People's Republic of China (which also sold weapons to Iran) All of these countries provided intelligence, agents for chemical weapons as well as other forms of military assistance to Saddam Hussein. Iran's principal allies during the war were Syria, Libya, North Korea, Cuba and Yugoslavia.

Although Saddam Hussein's forces made several early advances, by 1982, Iranian forces managed to push the Iraqi army back into Iraq. Khomeini refused a cease-fire from Iraq which was demanding huge reparation payments and an end to his rule. Khomeini also sought to export his Islamic revolution westward into Iraq, especially on the majority Shi'a Arabs living in the country. The war then continued for six more years until 1988, when Khomeini, in his words, "drank the cup of poison" and accepted a truce mediated by the United Nations. With the fall of Saddam's regime in Iraq in April 2003 and his capture in December of that year, Iran announced it had sent its own indictment against Saddam to Iraq's government, with the list of complaints including the use of chemical weapons. The total Iranian casualties of the war were estimated to be anywhere between 500,000 to 1,000,000. Almost all relevant international agencies have confirmed Saddams chemical warfare to blunt Iranian human wave attacks, while unanimously announcing that Iran never used chemical weapons during the war.

#### Government and politics :

Iran is a founding member of the United Nations organization and also a member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement.



The political system of the Islamic Republic is based on the 1979 Constitution called the "*Qanun-e Asasi*" ("Fundamental Law"). The system comprises several intricately connected governing bodies.

#### Supreme Leader :

The Supreme Leader of Iran is responsible for delineation and supervision of "the general policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran". The Supreme Leader is *Commander-in-Chief* of the armed forces, controls the military intelligence and security operations; and has sole power to declare war. The heads of the judiciary, state radio and television networks, the commanders of the police and military forces and six of the twelve members of the Council of Guardians are appointed by the Supreme Leader. The Assembly of Experts elects and dismisses the Supreme Leader on the basis of qualifications and popular esteem. The Assembly of Experts is responsible for supervising the Supreme Leader in the performance of legal duties.

#### Executive :

After the Supreme Leader, the Constitution defines the President as the highest state authority. The President is elected by universal suffrage for a term of four years. Presidential candidates must be approved by the Council of Guardians prior to running in order to ensure their allegiance to the ideals of the Islamic revolution. The President is responsible for the implementation of the Constitution and for the exercise of executive powers, except for matters directly related to the Supreme Leader, who has the final say in all matters. The President appoints and supervises the Council of Ministers, coordinates government decisions, and selects government policies to be placed before the legislature. Eight Vice-Presidents serve under the President, as well as a cabinet of twenty-one ministers, who must all be approved by the legislature. Unlike many other states, the executive branch in Iran does not control the armed forces. Although the President appoints the Ministers of Intelligence and Defense, it is customary for the President to obtain explicit approval from the Supreme Leader for these two ministers before presenting them to the legislature for a vote of confidence.

#### Council of Guardians :

The Council of Guardians comprises twelve jurists including six appointed by the Supreme Leader. The head of the judiciary, who is also appointed by the Supreme Leader, recommends the remaining six, who are officially appointed by Parliament. The Council interprets the constitution and may veto Parliament. If a law is deemed incompatible with the constitution or *Sharia* (Islamic law) , it is referred back to Parliament for revision. In a controversial exercise of its authority, the Council has drawn upon a narrow interpretation of Iran's constitution to veto parliamentary candidates.

#### Expediency Council :

The Expediency Council has the authority to mediate disputes between Parliament and the Council of Guardians, and serves as an advisory body to the Supreme Leader, making it one of the most powerful governing bodies in the country.

## Parliament :

The *Majles-e Shura-ye Eslami* (Islamic Consultative Assembly) is comprised of 290 members elected for four-year terms. The Majlis drafts legislation, ratifies international treaties, and approves the national budget. All Majlis candidates and all legislation from the assembly must be approved by the Council of Guardians. Before the Islamic Revolution, Iran's legislature was bicameral with both the Majlis and a Senate; the Senate was eliminated in the 1979 constitution.

## Judiciary :

The Supreme Leader appoints the head of the Judiciary, who in turn appoints the head of the Supreme Court and the chief public prosecutor. There are several types of courts including public courts that deal with civil and criminal cases, and "revolutionary courts" which deal with certain categories of offenses, including crimes against national security. The decisions of the revolutionary courts are final and cannot be appealed. The Special Clerical Court handles crimes allegedly committed by clerics, although it has also taken on cases involving lay people. The Special Clerical Court functions independently of the regular judicial framework and is accountable only to the Supreme Leader. The Court's rulings are final and cannot be appealed.

## Assembly of Experts :



**After the revolution, Shahyad Tower was renamed to Azadi Tower (Freedom Tower)**

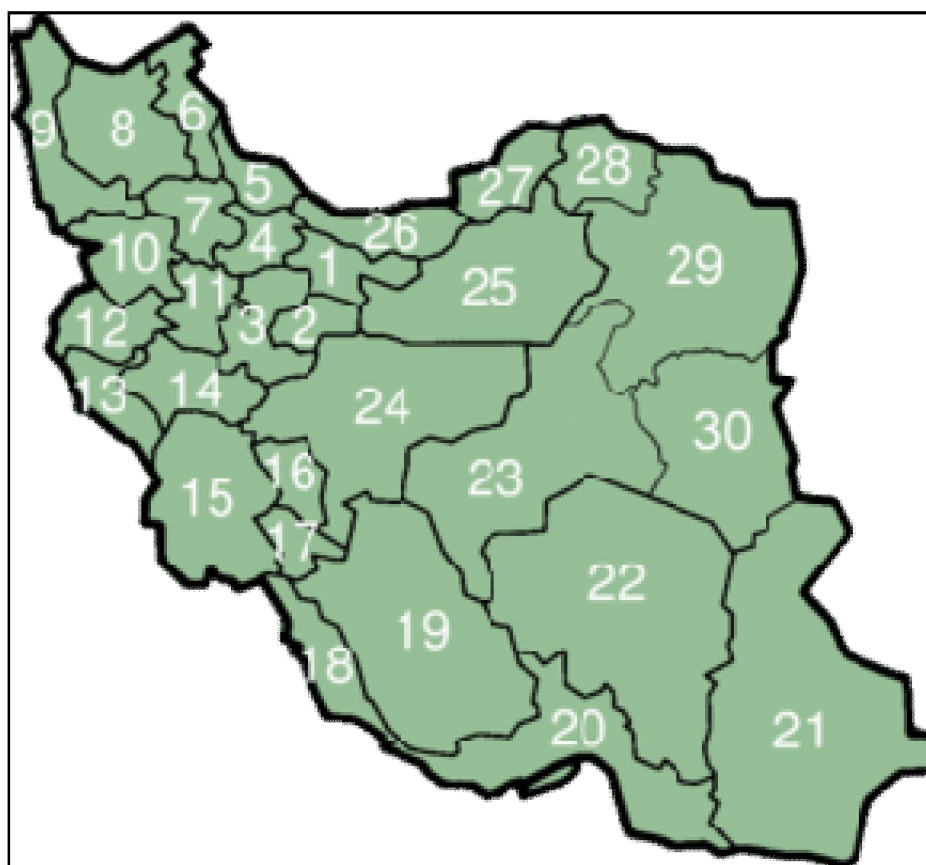
The Assembly of Experts, which meets for one week annually, comprises 86 "virtuous and learned" clerics elected by adult suffrage for eight-year terms. As with the presidential and parliamentary elections, the Council of Guardians determines candidates' eligibility. The Assembly elects the Supreme Leader and has the constitutional authority to remove the Supreme Leader from power at any time. The Assembly has never been known to challenge any of the Supreme Leader's decisions.

### City and village councils :

Local councils are elected by public vote to four-year terms in all cities and villages of Iran. According to article seven of Iran's Constitution, these local councils together with the Parliament are "decision-making and administrative organs of the State". This section of the constitution was not implemented until 1999 when the first local council elections were held across the country. Councils have many different responsibilities including electing mayors, supervising the activities of municipalities; studying the social, cultural, educational, health, economic, and welfare requirements of their constituencies; planning and co-ordinating national participation in the implementation of social, economic, constructive, cultural, educational and other welfare affairs.

### Administrative divisions :

Iran is divided into thirty provinces (*ostanha*, sing. *ostan*), each governed by an appointed governor (استانداری, *ostāndār*). The map does not show the southern islands of Hormozgan (#20 listed below):



- |                    |                                |                            |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Tehran          | 11. Hamedan                    | 21. Sistan and Baluchistan |
| 2. Qom             | 12. Kermanshah                 | 22. Kerman                 |
| 3. Markazi         | 13. Ilam                       | 23. Yazd                   |
| 4. Qazvin          | 14. Lorestan                   | 24. Esfahan                |
| 5. Gilan           | 15. Khuzestan                  | 25. Semnan                 |
| 6. Ardabil         | 16. Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari  | 26. Mazandaran             |
| 7. Zanjan          | 17. Kohkiluyeh and Buyer Ahmad | 27. Golestan               |
| 8. East Azarbaijan | 18. Bushehr                    | 28. North Khorasan         |
| 9. West Azarbaijan | 19. Fars                       | 29. Razavi Khorasan        |
| 10. Kurdistan      | 20. Hormozgan                  | 30. South Khorasan         |

Geography and climate :



**Mount Damavand is highest point of Iran and the Middle East**



**Hills south west of Sanandaj near the village of Kilaneh, Kurdistan Province**

Iran is the seventeenth-largest country in the world. Its area roughly equals the size of the United Kingdom, France, Spain, and Germany combined, one-fifth the size of the United States or roughly the size of the state of Alaska. Its borders are with Azerbaijan (432 km/268 mi) and Armenia (35 km/22 mi) to the northwest; the Caspian Sea to the north; Turkmenistan (992 km/616 mi) to the northeast; Pakistan (909 km/565 mi) and Afghanistan (936 km/582 mi) to the east; Turkey (499 km/310 mi) and Iraq

(1,458 km/906 mi) to the west; and finally the waters of the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman to the south. Iran's area is 1,648,000 km<sup>2</sup> (approximately 636,300 mi<sup>2</sup>), of which 1,636,000 km<sup>2</sup> (approx. 631,663 mi<sup>2</sup>) is land and 12,000 km<sup>2</sup> (approx. 4,633 mi<sup>2</sup>) is water.

Iran is one of the world's most mountainous countries, its landscape is dominated by rugged mountain ranges that separate various basins or plateaus from one another. The populous western part is the most mountainous, with ranges such as the Caucasus, Zagros and Alborz Mountains; the latter contains Iran's highest point, Mount Damavand at 5,604 m (18,386 ft), which is not only the country's highest peak but also the highest mountain on the Eurasian landmass west of the Hindu Kush. The eastern part consists mostly of desert basins like the saline Dasht-e Kavir, and some salt lakes. Except for some scattered oases, these deserts are uninhabited.



**Dizin skiing resort, Iran**



**Fars Province landscape**

The only large plains are found along the coast of the Caspian Sea and at the northern end of the Persian Gulf, where Iran borders the mouth of the Arvand river. Smaller, discontinuous plains are found along the remaining coast of the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz and the Sea of Oman.

Iran's climate is mostly arid or semiarid, to subtropical along the Caspian coast. On the northern edge of the country (the Caspian coastal plain) temperatures nearly fall below freezing and remain humid for the rest of the year. Summer temperatures rarely exceed 29 °C (84 °F). Annual precipitation is 680 mm (27 in) in the eastern part of the plain and more than 1,700 mm (67 in) in the western part. To the west, settlements in the Zagros Mountains basin experience lower temperatures, severe winters, sub-freezing average daily temperatures and heavy snowfall. The eastern and central basins are arid, with less than 200 mm (eight in) of

rain and have occasional desert. Average summer temperatures exceed 38°C (100°F). The coastal plains of the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman in southern Iran have mild winters, and very humid and hot summers. The annual precipitation ranges from 135 to 355 mm (five to fourteen inches).

Economy :



**A building on a busy commercial street in Tehran**



**An Iran Air Boeing 747-200**

Iran's economy is a mixture of central planning, state ownership of oil and other large enterprises, village agriculture, and small-scale private trading and service ventures. Its economic infrastructure has been improving steadily over the past two decades.

In the early 21st century the service sector contributed the largest percentage of the GDP, followed by industry (mining and manufacturing) and agriculture. About 45 percent of the government's budget came from oil and natural gas revenues, and 31 percent came from taxes and fees. Government spending contributed to an average annual inflation rate of 14 percent in the period 2000-2004. In 2004 the GDP was estimated at \$163 billion, or \$2,440 per capita (\$8,100 at PPP). Because of these figures and the country's diversified but small industrial base, the United Nations classifies Iran's economy as semideveloped.

The current administration continues to follow the market reform plans of the previous one and indicated that it will diversify Iran's oil-reliant economy. It is attempting to do this by investing revenues in areas like automobile manufacturing, aerospace industries, consumer electronics, petrochemicals and nuclear technology.

Iran also expects to attract billions of dollars of foreign investment by creating a more favorable investment climate, such as reduced restrictions and duties on imports, and free-

trade zones like in Chabahar and the island of Kish. Modern Iran has a solid middle class and a growing economy but continues to be affected by inflation and unemployment.

Iranian budget deficits have been a chronic problem, in part due to large-scale state subsidies (totaling some \$7.25 billion per year) that include foodstuffs and especially gasoline.

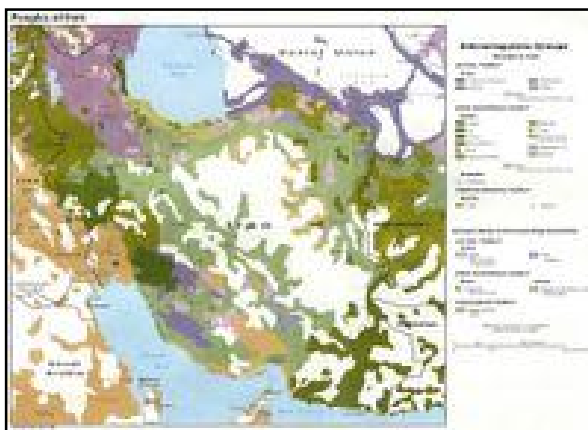
Iran is OPEC's second largest oil producer, exporting over three million barrels of oil per day; moreover, it holds 10% of the world's confirmed oil reserves. Iran also has the world's second largest natural gas reserves (after Russia). The strong oil market in 1996 helped ease financial pressures on Iran and allowed for Tehran's timely debt service payments.

The services sector has seen the greatest long-term growth in terms of its share of GDP, but the sector remains volatile. State investment has boosted agriculture with the liberalization of production and the improvement of packaging and marketing helping to develop new export markets. Thanks to the construction of many dams throughout the country in recent years, large-scale irrigation schemes, and the wider production of export-based agricultural items like dates, flowers, and pistachios, produced the fastest economic growth of any sector in Iran over much of the 1990s. Although successive years of severe drought in 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001 have held back output growth substantially, agriculture remains one of the largest employers, accounting for 22% of all jobs according to the 1991 census.

Iran has also developed a biotechnology, nanotechnology, and pharmaceuticals industry. For energy, it currently relies on conventional methods, but as of March 2006, uranium refinement, the last major hurdle to developing nuclear power, was revealed to have taken place.

Iran's major commercial partners are China, Russia, Germany, France, Italy, Japan and South Korea. Since the late 1990s, Iran has increased its economic cooperation with other developing countries, including Syria, India, Cuba, Venezuela, and South Africa. Iran is also expanding its trade ties with Turkey and Pakistan and shares with its partners the common goal of creating a single economic market in West and Central Asia, much like the European Union.

### Demographics :



### **Ethnic diversity of Iran**

Iran is a diverse country consisting of people of many religions and ethnic backgrounds cemented by the Persian culture. Persians, the founders of Ancient Persia, constitute the majority of the population. Seventy percent of present-day Iranians are Iranian peoples, native



speakers of Indo-European languages who are descended from the Aryan ( Indo-Iranians) tribes that began migrating from Central Asia into what is now Iran in the second millennium BC. The majority of the population speaks one of the Iranian languages, including the official language, Persian ( Farsi). The main ethnic groups are Persians (51%), Azeris (24%), Gilaki and Mazandarani (8%), Kurds (7%), Arabs (3%), Baluchi (2%), Lurs (2%), Turkmens (2%), Qashqai, Armenians, Persian Jews, Georgians, Assyrians, Circassians, Tats, Pashtuns and others (1%). The number of native speakers of Persian in Iran is estimated at around 40 million. However, the Iranian languages and their various dialects (totaling an estimated 150-200 million speakers) exceed the Iranian borders and are spoken throughout western China, southern Russia, and eastern Turkey.

Iran's population increased dramatically during the latter half of the twentieth century, reaching about 70 million by 2006. In recent years, Iran appears to have taken control of its high population growth rate and many studies show that Iran's population growth rate will continue to decline until stabilizing by the year 2050 at around 100 million. More than two-thirds of the population are under the age of 30, and the literacy rate is 80%.

The Iranian diaspora is estimated at over three million people who emigrated to North America, Europe, South America and Australia, mostly after the Iranian revolution in 1979. Iran also hosts one of the largest refugee populations in the world, with more than one million refugees, mostly from Afghanistan and Iraq. As recent as October 10, 2006, Iranian officials have been working hand in hand with the UNHCR and Afghani officials to further its official government policy of repatriation.






Most Iranians are Muslims; 90% belong to the Shi'a branch of Islam, the official state religion, and about 8% belong to the Sunni branch, many Kurds. The remaining 2% are non-Muslim religious minorities, mainly Bahá'ís, Mandeans, Hindus, Zoroastrians, Jews, and Christians. The latter three minority religions are officially recognized and protected, and have reserved seats in the *Majles* (Parliament). However the Bahá'í Faith, Iran's largest religious minority, is not officially recognized, and has been persecuted during its existence in Iran. Since the 1979 revolution the persecution has increased with executions and the denial of access to higher education. More recent persecution towards Bahá'ís has led to the United Nations Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights stating on March 20, 2006 that "*this latest development indicates that the situation with regard to religious minorities in Iran is, in fact, deteriorating.*"

#### Major cities :

Iran has one of the highest urban-growth rates in the world. From 1950 to 2002 the urban proportion of the population increased from 27% to 60%. The United Nations predicts that by 2030 the urban population will form 80% of the overall population. Most of the internal migrants have settled near the cities of Tehran, Isfahan, Ahwaz, and Qom. Tehran is the largest city with 7,160,094 inhabitants ( metropolitan: 14,000,000). More than half of the country's industry is based there. Industries include the manufacturing of cars, electronics and electrical equipment, military weaponry, textiles, sugar, cement, and chemical products. Mashhad, one of the holiest Shi'a cities, is the second largest city with a population of 2.8 million.



The population of the eight largest cities ( 2006, unless otherwise noted) are as follows (non-metropolitan estimates):

			
<u>Tehran</u> 7,160,094	<u>Mashad</u> 2,837,734	<u>Isfahan</u> 1,573,378	<u>Tabriz</u> 1,523,085
			
<u>Karaj</u> 1,460,961	<u>Shiraz</u> 1,279,140	<u>Qom</u> 1,046,578	<u>Ahvaz</u> 841,145

### Culture :

Iran has a long history of art, music, architecture, poetry, philosophy, traditions, and ideology. The following quotes from poets belonging to a vast chronological and geographical expanse can be a proper exemplification of the devotion to Persian culture and its multimillennial penetrating existence:

"Iran is the Heart and all the universe, The Body,

Of this claim, the poet feels no regret or humility." Nizami

"Whether one thinks of Iran as Eden or Garden,

The smell of musk abounds there from friend and companion." Ferdowsi

"Of one Essence is the human race

thus has Creation put the base,

One Limb impacted is sufficient

For all Others to feel the Mace." Saadi  
Inscribed on the United Nations' Hall of Nations



**Miniature painting by Mohammad Tajvidi on the cover of the Divan of Hafez ("Hafez's Anthology"), published 1969**

Iranian culture has long been the predominant culture of the Middle East and Central Asia, with Persian considered the language of intellectuals during much of the second millennium AD. Nearly all philosophical, scientific, or literary work of the Islamic empires was written in or translated to Persian, as well as Arabic. The Islamic conquest of Iran during the first half of the seventh century began a synthesis of the Arabic and Iranian tongues. By the tenth century, this cultural diffusion threatened to erase native Persian entirely, as many Persian writers, scientists, and scholars elected to write in the language of the Qur'an (Arabic) (see List of Iranian scientists and scholars). Moreover, Islamic caliphate was largely disdainful towards Persians and Persian culture more specifically during the rule of first caliphate dynasty of Umayyads who vividly sought Arabic supremacy in all aspects of their empire. This prompted Ferdowsi to compose the *Shahnameh* (Persian: *Book of Kings*), Iran's national epic from its legendary prehistoric nascence till its defeat at the battle of *al-Qādisiyyah*. It was written entirely in Persian. This gave rise to a strong reassertion of Iranian national identity, and is in part responsible for the continued existence of Persian as a separate language.

Ferdowsi (935–1020) :

Iran's literary tradition is rich and varied as well, although the world is most familiar with Iranian poetry. Rumi is by far the most famous of Iran's poets, although Saadi is considered by many Iranians to be just as influential. Both poets were practitioners of Sufism, and are quoted by Iranians with the same frequency and weight as the Qur'an.

Cinema has continued to thrive in modern Iran, and many Iranian directors have garnered worldwide recognition for their work. (Iranian movies have won over three hundred awards in the past twenty-five years.) One of the best-known directors is Abbas Kiarostami. The Iranian media is a mixture of private and state-owned, but books and movies must be approved by the

Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance before being released to the public. The state also actively monitors the Internet, which has become enormously popular among the Iranian youth. Iran is now the world's fourth largest country of bloggers.

The quest for social justice and equity is an important Iranian cultural trait. The Cyrus Cylinder is considered the world's first declaration of human rights, and was the basis of government for the Achaemenid dynasty. Equality of the sexes also has a strong historical precedent in Iran: from the Achaemenid to Sassanid dynasties, women were encouraged to pursue an education and study at universities; they held property, influenced the affairs of state, and worked and received the same compensation as men. Today, women compose more than half of the incoming classes for universities around the country. Respect for the elderly and hospitality for foreigners are also an integral part of Iranian etiquette.

The Iranian New Year (Norouz) is celebrated on March 21 from Spain in the west to Kazakhstan in the east. It is celebrated as the first day of spring. Norouz was nominated as one of UNESCO's Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2004.

Iranian food has much in common with the other cuisines of the Middle East, but is often considered to be the most sophisticated and imaginative of them all, as colorful and complex as a Persian carpet." | Najmieh Batmanglij, *New Food of Life*

#### Health :

According to the Iranian Constitution, the government is required to provide every citizen of the country with access to social security that covers retirement, unemployment, old age, disability, accidents, calamities, health and medical treatment and care services. This is covered by public revenues and income derived from public contributions.

In its 2000 report on national healthcare systems, the World Health Organization ranks Iran's overall healthcare system performance as 93rd among the world's nations. The health status of Iranians has improved over the last two decades. Iran has been able to extend public health preventive services through the establishment of an extensive Primary Health Care network. As a result child and maternal mortality rates have fallen significantly, and life expectancy at birth has risen remarkably. Infant (IMR) and under-five (U5MR) mortality have decreased to 28.6 and 35.6 per 1,000 live births respectively in 2000, compared to an IMR of 122 per 1,000 and an U5MR of 191 per 1,000 in 1970.

Scientific progress :



An eighteenth-century Persian astrolabe. Throughout the Middle Ages, the natural philosophy and mathematics of the ancient Greeks and Persians were furthered and preserved within Persia. During this period, Persia became a centre for the manufacture of scientific instruments, retaining its reputation for quality well into the nineteenth century.



Photo taken from medieval manuscript by Qotbeddin Shirazi (1236–1311), a Persian astronomer. The image depicts an epicyclic planetary model.

Science in Iran, as the country itself, has a long history. Iranians contributed significantly to the current understanding of astronomy, nature, medicine, mathematics, and philosophy. To mention just a few, Persians first discovered Algebra, invented the wind mill and found medical uses of alcohol.

In present times, scientists in Iran are trying to revive the golden age of Persian science. Iran has increased its publication output nearly tenfold from 1996 through 2004, and has been ranked first in terms of output growth rate followed by China.

Theoretical and computational sciences are rapidly developing in Iran. Theoretical physicists and chemists are regularly publishing in high impact factor journals. Despite the limitations in funds, facilities, and international collaborations, Iranian scientists remain highly productive in several experimental fields as pharmacology, pharmaceutical chemistry, organic chemistry, and polymer chemistry. Iranian scientists are also helping construct the Compact Muon Solenoid, a detector for CERN's Large Hadron Collider due to come online in 2007. Iranian

Biophysicists (especially molecular biophysics) have gained international reputation since the 1990s. High field NMR facilities, as well as Microcalorimetry, Circular dichroism, and instruments for single protein channel studies have been provided in Iran during recent decades. Tissue engineering and research on biomaterials have just started to emerge in biophysics departments. In late 2006, Iranian scientists cloned successfully a sheep, by somatic cell nuclear transfer, at the Rouyan research centre in Isfahan.

#### Human rights :

Iranian history boasts the first charter of human rights ; the Persian Empire (Iran) established unprecedented principles of human rights in the 6th century BCE. Since then, the status of human rights in Iran has varied dramatically. Today, the violation of human rights by the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to be significant, despite many efforts by Iranian human right activists, writers, NGOs and some political parties. Human rights in Iran regularly faces the issues of governmental impunity, restricted freedom of speech, and gender inequality. According to Human Rights Watch, respect for human rights in Iran, especially freedom of expression and opinion, deteriorated considerably in 2005. The government routinely uses torture and ill-treatment in detention, including prolonged solitary confinement, to punish dissidents. The judiciary, which is accountable to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, has been at the centre of many serious human rights violations.

#### Source :

<https://www.cs.mcgill.ca/~rwest/wikispeedia/wpcd/wp/i/Iran.htm>

### 32. Iran - 2 :



Zagros Mountains

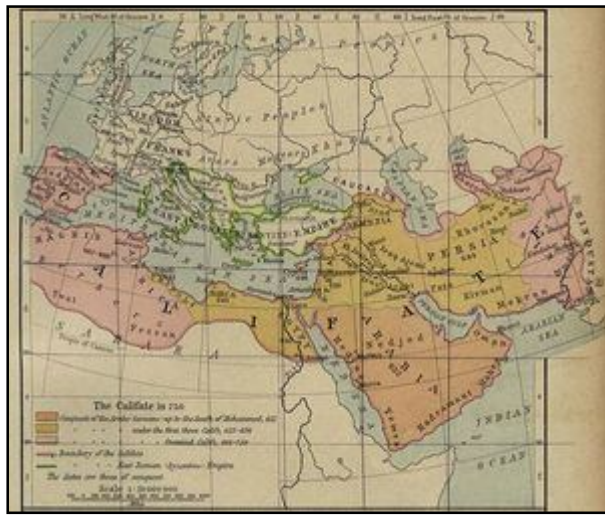


Map of Iran in Middle East Countries



Map of area around the Aral Sea. Aral Sea boundaries are circa 1960. Countries at least partially in the Aral Sea watershed are in yellow.





Names of territories during the Caliphate, Khorasan was part of Persia (in yellow).

Iran (इरान) (Īrān), is a country located in West Asia, known previously as Persia.

Location :

Iran borders Armenia, Azerbaijan (including its Nakhichevan exclave), and Turkmenistan to the north, Pakistan and Afghanistan to the east, and Turkey and Iraq to the west. In addition, it borders the Persian Gulf, across which lie Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Shi'a Islam is the official state religion. Throughout history, Iran has been of great geostrategic importance because of its central location in Eurasia. The name Iran is a cognate of Aryan and literally means "Land of the Aryans."

History :

The Harsha Charita of Bana/Chapter II mentions The Visit of Bana to the King Harshavardhana....The doorkeeper, having come up and saluted him, addressed him respectfully in a gentle voice, "Approach and enter, his highness is willing to see you." Then Bana entered, as he directed, saying, "I am indeed happy that he thinks me worthy of this honour." He next beheld a stable filled with the king's favourite horses from Vanayu, Aratta, Kamboja, Bharadvaja, Sindh, and Persia.

## Provinces of Iran :

According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*,

1. Khuzestan and Bakhtiari
2. Astarabad and Gorgan
3. Azerbaijan
4. Fars
5. Gerrus
6. Gilan and Talish
7. Hamadan
8. Iraq , Gulpaigan , Khunsar , ( Kezzaz , Ferakan , and Tusirkhan )
9. Isfahan
10. Kashan
11. Kazvin
12. Kerman and Baluchistan
13. Kermanshah
14. Kamseh
15. Khar
16. Khorasan
17. Godfather
18. Kurdistan
19. Luristan and Burujird
20. Mazandaran
21. Nehavend , Malayir and Kamereh
22. Savah
23. Samnan and Damghan
24. Shahrud and Bostam
25. Teheran
26. Zerend and Bagdadi Shahsevens

## Dependencies :

1. Asadabad
2. Demavend
3. Firuzkuh
4. Josehekan
5. Kangaver
6. Natanz
7. []
8. Tarom lia
9. Kharakan

Until 1950, Iran was divided into twelve.

provinces: Ardalan, Azerbaijan, Baluchestan, Fars, Gilan, Araq-e Ajam, Khorasan, Khuzestan, Kerman, Larestan, Lorestan, and Mazandaran.



In 1950, Iran was reorganized to form ten numbered provinces with subordinate governorates: Gilan; Mazandaran; East Azerbaijan; West Azerbaijan; Kermanshah; Khuzestan; Fars; Kerman; Khorasan; Isfahan.

From 1960 to 1981 the governorates were raised to provincial status one by one. Since then several new provinces have been created, most recently in 2004 when the province of Khorasan was split into three new provinces as well as splitting of the new Alborz Province from Teheran province in 2010.

#### Current provinces with capitals :

- Alborz: Karaj, Until 23 June 2010, Alborz was part of Tehran province.
- Ardabil: Ardabil, Until 1993, Ardabil was part of East Azerbaijan province.
- Azerbaijan, East: Tabriz
- Azerbaijan, West: Urmia, During the Pahlavi Dynasty Urmia was known as Rezaiyeh.
- Bushehr: Bushehr, Originally part of Fars province. Until 1977, the province was known as Khalij-e Fars (Persian Gulf).
- Chahar Mahaal and Bakhtiari: Shahrekord Until 1973 was part of Isfahan province.
- Fars: Shiraz
- Gilan : Rasht
- Golestan: Gorgan, On the 31 May 1997, the shahrestans of Aliabad, Gonbad-e-kavus, Gorgan, Kordkuy, Minudasht, and Torkaman were separated from Mazandaran province to form Golestan province. Gorgan was called Esteraba or Astarabad until 1937.
- Hamadan: Hamadan, Originally part of Kermanshah province.
- Hormozgān: Bandar Abbas, Originally part of Kerman province. Until 1977, the province was known as Banader va Jazayer-e Bahr-e Oman (Ports and Islands of the Sea of Oman).
- Ilam : Ilam , originally part of Kermanshah province.
- Isfahan: Isfahan, In 1986, some parts of Markazi province were transferred to Isfahan, Semnan, and Zanjan provinces.
- Kerman : Kerman
- Kermanshah: Kermanshah, Between 1950 and 1979, both Kermanshah province and city were known as Kermanshahan and between 1979 and 1995 were known as Bakhtaran.
- Khorasan, North: Bojnourd, On 29 September 2004, Khorasan was divided into three provinces. North Khorasan; Razavi Khorasan; South Khorasan.
- Khorasan, Razavi: Mashhad, On 29 September 2004, Khorasan was divided into three provinces. North Khorasan; Razavi Khorasan; South Khorasan.
- Khorasan, South: Birjand, On 29 September 2004, Khorasan was divided into three provinces. North Khorasan; Razavi Khorasan; South Khorasan.
- Khuzestan: Ahvaz

- Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad: Yasuj, Originally part of Khuzestan province. Until 1990, the province was known as Bovir Ahmadi and Kohkiluyeh.
- Kurdistan: Sanandaj, Originally part of Gilan province.
- Lorestan: Khorramabad, Originally part of Khuzestan province.
- Markazi: Arak, Originally part of Mazandaran province. In 1986, some parts of Markazi province were transferred to Isfahan, Semnan, and Zanjan provinces.
- Mazandaran: Sari
- Qazvin: Qazvin, On 31 December 1996, the shahrestans of Qazvin and Takestan were separated from Zanjan province to form the province of Qazvin.
- Qom: Qom, Until 1995, Qom was a shahrestan of Tehran province.
- Semnan: Semnan, Originally part of Mazandaran province. In 1986, some parts of Markazi province were transferred to Isfahan, Semnan, and Zanjan provinces.
- Sistan and Baluchestan: Zahedan, Until 1986, the province was known as Baluchestan and Sistan.
- Tehran: Tehran, Until 1986, Tehran was part of Markazi province.
- Yazd: Yazd, Originally part of Isfahan province. In 1986, part of Kerman province was transferred to Yazd province. In 2002, Tabas shahrestan was transferred from Khorasan province to Yazd.
- Zanjan: Zanjan, Originally part of Gilan province. In 1986, some parts of Markazi province were transferred to Isfahan, Semnan, and Zanjan provinces.

#### Rivers in Iran :

- Shatt al-Arab
  - Haffar, originally an artificial channel now forming the estuary of the Karun
  - Karun River
    - Marun River
    - Ten river
      - Bakhtiari River
      - Koohrang
  - Tigris (Iraq)
    - Karkheh River
      - Seimareh River
    - Chankula River
    - Sirwan River (Diyala River)
      - Alwand River
    - Little Zab
- Bahmanshir, the original mouth of the Karun

- Jarahi
- Zohreh River
- Helleh River
- Mond River
  - Shur River
- Mehran River
- Kul River
  - Gowdeh River
  - Rostam River

Flowing into the Gulf of Oman\_:

- Dose to River
- Jagin River
- Gabrik River
- Bahu Kalat River (or Dashtiari River or Silup River)

Flowing into endorheic basins\_Lake Urmia\_:

- Aji Chay
  - Quri chay
- Zarrineh River
- Gadar River
- Ghaie River
- Alamlou River
- Leylan River
- Simineh River
- Mahabad River
- Barandouz River
- Shahar River
- Nazlou River
- Rozeh River
- Zola River

## Caspian Sea\_:

- Kura River (Azerbaijan)
  - Aras River
    - Balha River
      - Tulun river
    - Zangmar River
      - Barun river
- Sefīd-Rūd
  - Red Floors
  - Shahrood
    - Alamut River
- Cheshmeh Kileh River
  - Will Hezar River
  - Se hazar river
- Chaloos River
  - Sardab River
- Kojoor River
- Haraz River
  - Noor River
  - Lar River
- Atrek River
  - West Sumatra River
- Gharasu River

## Namak Lake\_:

- Abhar river
- Qom River
- Jajrood River
- Karaj River

Gavkhouni :

- Zayande River

Hamun-e Jaz Murian :

- Halil River
- Bampur River

Sistan Basin :

- Helmand River

Hamun-i-Mashkel :

- Mashkid River (Mashkel River)

'Karakum Desert :

- Harirud
  - Kashaf River

Shakti :

President Vijender Kumar Mathur has articles that Shaksthan trucks original habitat that Iran was located in the north-western part of the transitional state. It is called Sistan. Shakasthan is mentioned in Maha-Mayuri 95, the Chandravalli proposal article of Mathura Singh-stambh-Kadambanareesh Mayursharman. The words of the Mathura-inscription are - 'Sarvas Sakastanas Puye' which means, according to Cunningham , 'the virtue of the inhabitants of Shakstan'. Shakstan was based in Iran in the opinion of Rai Chaudhary (Political History of Uncontent India, p. 526) and the former men of Shakavanshi Chashtan and Rudradaman , Gujarat - Kathiawar I had settled from this place.

The doubts are mentioned in the Ramayan ('Swarasitavaranatvama: Shakyaravanamishitai:' Balakand 54,21; 'Kambojayavan Shchaiva-Shakaanapatananich' Kishkindha 23,12 Mahabharat ('Pahlavan Berberchainshav Kirtan Yavandravashravakan; "'10,44 and Mahabhashi (see Indian Antiquary 1857, p. 244) is in other texts.

## Iran (Persia) :

Iran - means the country of Aryans, the western part of Aryavarta. Iran is also called Persia. Persia is apricot and short form of India. Persians of Persia are called Persians and Parsis. Parsis are Aryans only. The two Iranians are famous (1) Family Peshdanda (2) Family Sasanians. Peshādāda is the compound word of peshā + daād. Pesh = forth, shingles = justice. That is, the first dynasty, which runs the judiciary (human theology), means the Sun dynasty. Sasanian apabhransh is of the Shashinis. Shashiyan is virtuous Shashi of Shashi = Moon. Means the lunar line.

Iran (Persia) - Iran is considered by Ariana in 'Alexander Nama English'. Arianna is apricot of Aryana. Aryan is the plural meaning of Arya means the country of Aryans. It means the western part of Aryavart. Therefore, Afghanistan, Bilochistan and Iran's militant land is called Plato of Ariane (p. 21).

Iran is also called Persia . Persia is apricot and short form of India. Missing T and B. The Iranians are called Iranians. Irani is of Iranian quality. It means Aryan. Persians of Persia are called Persians and Parsis. Persia and Parsi are apostrophes and shorts of Indians. Te and V have disappeared. Sanskrit 'B' becomes apostolic and becomes 'F' in Persian. Such as fallen from the home (The Fontaine Head of Religion by Babu Gangaprasad M.A.M.R.A.S. pp. 88 & 89).

The word Arya has appeared in many places in the Jindavasth (religious book of the Parsis). This proved that the Parsis consider themselves Aryajati. (Pp. 22-23)

Two Iranians are famous. 1. Khandan Peshdada 2. Khandan Sasanिया. Peshdada is the compound word of pesh + herpes. Pesh = forward, shingles = justice. That is, the first dynasty which runs the judicial system (human theology), means the Suryavanshis. (See The Parsi Religion Jindavastha Bai Jaun Wilson D.D.M.R.A.S.).

Sasanian apabhransh is of the Shashinis. Shashiyan is virtuous of Shashi. Shashi = Moon. Means the lunar line.

## Jats settle Iran and Afghanistan :

Thakur Deshraj has written There is a group of Shivais from the garden , Iran had increased even more. There he settled a city called Shivsthan, now called Sistan.

The Bana people went to the country of Iran and settled the township, where the name of the river on whose banks they had settled became famous. Went from the banks of Banganga in India, where earnest is now inhabited. Usha was the daughter of these people. Due to the fight with Krishna, the devotees have called Banasur the chief of Baan people, but this is not the case. Kans, Baan, Dantvakra were all Chandravanshis and were not asurs. Some believe that Scandinavia was inhabited by Skan ,the boy of Baan.

The Gandhar people were ruling in Kandahar for a long time. Gatai is a place in Afghanistan that is still famous by this name. Here Gatrwan said that Krishna's

[P.151]: was born to a queen named Lakshmana, laying the foundation of her kingdom. Gotla and Gatwal are descendants of the same Gatwan and Jats returning from Gatai .

Balhikon of Afghanistan in Blk had built their capital city to be known. A group had also grown in Iran , which is nowadays popularly known as Balik clan. Remember, clan is known as batch and lineage. It but nowadays Muslims and Sidv live in the province. Good horsemen are considered. A batch of Kashyap Gotri Jats live in the neighborhood of these Balik who are nowadays called Kaspi . Iran 's Solhuj district Karapia a Kbila. These are the people of the people. Yeh Karpashwa Jat Mathura Woke up from the district where his capital was in present-day business. In Afghanistan we also find a pargan called Mahavan . Its known naming these Karpshw will be the people. The middlemen would then have migrated from there to Solhuj district (Iran). Karpaya people are considered very good horsemen. It is said that initially they were inhabited by only 800 families in this district. Even today, they are the officers of this Solhuj district and follow Muslim religion.

[P.152]: The Gadar Jats of Uttar Pradesh, which we see today in a moderate condition, have been living for a long time on the banks of the river Gadar near Ushnai, the state of Ushan (Shukracharya).

Rowandiz is a province in Iran. It Sohran a Kabila lasts longer. He is the owner of Roandij. Loharu in India finds 52 villages in these Soharan or Sayoran . By the peculiarity of the law, the Soharan (Mandalik) rulers of Roandij are governed and the Shaurans of Loharu. If the religion of the religion is removed from seed, are not the Loharu and Soharan brothers of Iran?

Europe people Jats in Europe Assyrians believe came from. It is the only province of Assyria Iran. Which was settled by the Jats after going from Asirgarh in Malwa . There is also a Lahian district here. Lohian Jats of India have returned from this district.

Among the Jats, Anjana Jats are found in the state of Jaipur . Who have actually been chaotic at some point. A group of them have been on the banks of the river Ajri for a long time . The Jatali province gained considerable fame in Iran under the name of Jats.

Hisar district of Punjab is considered by all to be the district of Jats . Hisar has been a famous city near the Jagatu River in Iran . Now it is desolate Hisar of Iran

[P 0.153] have Sei discord and endure two landmarks. We do not know if there are any cities of Jats of the same name near Hisar in Punjab or not. Apart from this, two Hisar we still study in Afghanistan 's geography. One is Bala Hisar and the other Munda Hisar . Would it not be fair to call one of these Baline Jats and the other account of the blind Jats ?

Afghanistan in Shivi and Kurram two districts, which Shivi and worm Jats were famous name. There is also a Hala mountain named after Hala Jats, also called as Somagiri.

Iran considers Iran as a country of Zoroastrians, but there are only two lakhs of Parsis in the whole world. In fact, most of Iran was filled with Indian Kshatriyas.

Afghans many Jirge the Jats are among Yousafzai jirga had some Gujjars is written in. We also believe that he is among the Gurjars but the Gujjar gotra belonging to the Jats of Gujarat are of Gujarat are among them.

### Jats move to Europe :

Thakur Deshraj wrote Hun invasion of time Jgajartis and Akss rivers and the Caspian Sea , the Jat settled on the shores of Europe headed. At the time when the Huns were in turmoil in the Asian countries, the Jat people in Europe

[P.154]: Strikes. Because the Huns, like the storm, had uprooted the Jats from their places. The Jat groups first occupied Scandinavia and Germany. Colonel Tod , Mr. Pinkerton, Mr. Jnstrn, Digain , Pliny many European writers etc.

His Germany, Scandinavia, Room, Spain, cheeks, Jtland and Italy have described to invade others. Nowhere in these descriptions, Zeta, far jetty, and elsewhere goth Called by name. Because all these groups of conquering Jats had moved from the shores of Iran and Ka Caspian sea to Europe. That is why in European countries they have also been remembered as Shaka and Scythian. Iran is called Shakdweep.

So residents of Iran suspects were called. European historians say that the independent states of Germany , which are called Saxon states. Same doubt are of Jats. Those princely states were established by the winning Jats. We believe and also believe that he went from Jat Shakdweep itself. But the European writers want to sit in the mind so much that they went from India to Jat in Shal-Island . And they were among the dynasties who are known as Ram, Krishna and Yadu Kurus.

The Jats who had gone to Europe not only established states but they also taught Europe something. Morning bed

[P.155]: He had taught Europe all these things by getting up from the bath, worshiping God, worshiping the sword and horse, cultivating peace, working with buffaloes. He also erected victory pillars at many places. His column along the banks of the Rhine River in Germany was quite famous.

These victorious sons of Mother India had followed Vedic religion for a long time even after going to Europe. But circumstances finally forced him to be a Christian. If the evangelists of India kept reaching there, they would not have been a Christian at all. But in India, for the past two thousand years, there has been an attitude of a narrow religion which is known as fucking Hinduism . The summary of the mater received in connection with their rituals and ceremonies is as follows: -

- The Jats on the banks of the Jehoon and Jagjartis used to perform big celebrations on every solstice.
- Victorious Attila Jat leader said Allen was celebrated Kdag worship with great ceremony in the castle.



- The Jats of Germany wore long and loose clothes and tied a head of hair like a tuft to make a bean of head hair.
- The camps and the Shaivite Jats of Scandinavia worshiped Hargauri and Dharmati. On the festival, they sing songs praising Harikulesh and Buddha .
- His flag had a picture of Balaram 's plow. In the war, they used shul (spearhead) and mugdar (mace).
- He used to give great importance to the consent of his women during the time of calamity.
- Their women often considered it good to be sati.
- They did not consider the visiting people as slaves. He did not consider it his duty to accept his good things.
- At the time of the fight, he used to think that Yoginis come to the battlefield with blood.

These descriptions of brave Jats make our chests blossom happily, where they force us to cry with heart. The Jat world is not even aware of the fame of those world-winning heroes.

#### The Land of the Aryans :

In former ages, the names Ariana and Persian were used to describe the region which is today known as the Iranian plateau. The earliest Iranian reference to the word (airya/arya/aryana etc), however, predates the Iranian prophet Zoroaster (est. anywhere between 1200 to 1800 BCE, according to Plato and other Greek sources as early as 7000 BCE.) and is attested in non-Gathic Avesta; it appears as airya, meaning noble/spiritual/elevated; as airya dainhava (Yt.8.36, 52) meaning the land of the Aryans; and as airyana vaejah, the original land of the Aryans. Other peoples were called Anairya and later Aniranian, meaning un-aryan or non-Aryan.

During the Achaemenid dynasty (550-330 BCE), the Persian people called their provincial homeland Pārsa, the Old Persian name for Cyrus the Great's kingdom which belonged to the Persian tribe of the Iranian branch of the Indo-Iranians and which can still be found in the term Pars or Fars as part of the heartland of Iran and for example in the map by Eratosthenes and other historical or modern maps.

However, the country as a whole was called Aryanam. The word Ariya, noble/spiritual/elevated, is attested in the Inscriptions of Darius the Great and his son, Xerxes; it is used both as a linguistic and a racial designation as Darius refers to this at the Behistun inscription (DBiv.89), which is written in Aryan language/airyan, also known as Old Persian. Both Darius and Xerxes state in Naqsh-i Rostam (DNa.14), Susa (DSe.13), and Persepolis (XPh.13):

Adam Pārsa, Pārsahyā puça; Ariya, Ariya ciça :

I am Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan, belonging to the Aryan race." --Darius the Great (549 BCE - 486 BCE)

In Parthian times (248 BCE–224 CE), Aryanam was modified to Aryan. In the early Sassanid Period (224–651 CE), it had already evolved to Middle Persian Ērān or Ērān Shahr which finally resulted in New Persian Iran or Iran Shahr.

At the time of the Achaemenid empire, the Greeks called the country Persis, the Greek name for Pars (Fars), the central region where the empire was founded; this passed into Latin and became Persia, the name widely used in Western countries which causes confusion as Persia is actually Pars (Fars) province.

### Jats in Iran :

Giving an account of the Jats' settlement in Persia, Qazi Athar Mubarakpuri had stated that they had been living in this region since a long time, and they had developed many big and flourishing towns of their own as we are informed by Ibn-i-Khurdazbeh (d.893 AD) that at about sixty miles away from the city of Ahwaz, there is a big city of the Jats, which is known after them as *al-Zutt*. Another geographer of the same period had also observed that in the vicinity of Khuzistan there was a grand city *Haumat al-Zutt*. These evidences given by the eminent author are enough to suggest that the Jats who settled in Persia gradually built up their economic resources and made significant contribution to urbanization of that country.

Iran was one of an important abode of Jats next to India. There is a river called Ban on western part of Iran. There are evidences of a fort of Bana clan Jats on the banks of this river. Bana Jats are connected with Bayana town in Bharatpur district also. A river in Bayana is known as Banganga. It is believed that Bana people from Iran to Bayana or from Bayana to Iran migrated under certain pressures and named the river Ban on the basis of original name.

Herodotus has written that at the time of war of Darius the Great and his son, Xerxes with Greeks they had an army of Indian Jats. In Sojahaj district of Iran there is a tribe called Karpaya which is of Karav people. It is possible that these people moved from Mathura district. Their capital might be at Karav, a place in Mathura district. At present, this area of Mathura is occupied by Hanga Jats.

According to Ram Swarup Joon, when Alexander the Great attacked Dara, King of Iran, the major part of Dara's army consisted of Jat troops. Dara was very proud of these soldiers. Confidence in their bravery encouraged him to face Alexander. Todd also supports this fact and writes that the Jat contingent consisted of two hundred chariots and fifty elephants and formed the right flank of Dara's army. The Jat charioteers scattered Alexander's army. Alexander then sent for Scythian Jat troops. These were mostly Dahiya Jats and were equipped with lances. With the help of these troops Alexander defeated Dara. The Greek historian Herodotus writes that these Dahiya Jats contributed a great deal to the later successes of Alexander.

Jats have a big gotra called Shavi or Shivi. Iran was at one time known as Shavi country. Huen Tsang and Fa-Hien have mentioned in their accounts of their Indian travels, that through Tartary, Kashgar, and Pamir, they reached Shavi country. Lord Shiv or Shavi is known as prophet Shish in Iran, and his shrine on the banks of River Tigris is visited by a large number

of Pilgrims. A province in Iran is called Seistan, a derivative of Shivi-Stan. The Jats of Shavi gotra came to be known as Shavisthians or Seythians. The Great Scythian writer Abul Gazi has called himself a Chandravanshi Jat. He also writes that the mother of Scythian community was the daughter of Aila or Ailya Devi.

The Sakas invaded Iran from the coast of Baltic Sea, and looted a lot of treasure. When they were busy dividing the booty amongst themselves, at night the Jats made a surprise raid and snatched everything back.

Thakur Deshraj has mentioned a story of a fort of Bana Jats of Iran. According to him a fort of Bana Jats on the Ban River was seized by their foes. After a long period of seizure, when the ration was about to finish, the gards of fort got worried and then consulted an elderly lady to tell some method escape. She suggested that a part of the flour they are having with them be thrown away outside the fort. The enemy army would think that there is no dearth of ration in the fort and they will remove the seize. This was advice was followed and the foes removed the seize. (Cunningham, History of Sikhs). This story reveals that Jats had great respect for their elders, and women had a high place in the society. These facts also indicate they (Jats) were the followers of democracy and believed in system of *ganasangha*.

According to Thakur Deshraj, The Chandravanshi Aryans of India had habitations in Iran which were known as Jatali. He has referred General Cunningham who has mentioned the presence of Yayati Vanshi Jats in Jatali. Yayati was son of Nahush. This province got the name Jatali, being the habitation of Jats. The language of these Jats is Jadgali (alternate names, Jatgali, Jatki, Jat).

According to Dr Natthan Singh, not only in Iran but around Caspian sea there were habitations of Dhe gotra Jats. Dhe is derived from Yaudheya. According to Thakur Deshraj, they were not treated well in India by local people nor they were treated by Jats returned from Ghazni. They were not given equal status but when they established Nabha and Patiala states with their own strength, they got due importance and recognition.

Illiot in his book "Memoirs of races of the north west provinces of India" has mentioned Jats by the name Avars. It must be their gotra. Probably, these people moved to Bharatpur area and settled village named Abahar. Afterwards looking to the dominance of Sinsinwars, they also became Sinsinwar.

There is definite evidence that during the Sasanid Empire in Iran, the Jat tribes living in Sistan area of Iran were exiled to live in what is now the Baluchistan and Sindh area of Pakistan. The Cambridge History of Iran quotes evidence for this expulsion. The word used for these tribes is Jutt, as we still pronounce today. They were exiled for the alleged harassment of the mainland Iran through sporadic raids. The Jutts were in Sindh when Mohammed Bin Quasim invaded Sindh in the sixth century. The clan names mentioned are Samra, Toor, Bhangoo, Bhullar and Sekhon.

Bhim Singh Dahiya published a paper entitled "The Mauryas: Their identity" in Vishvesvranand Indological Journal, Vol 17 (1979) p 112-133 ; in this classical treatise he proved several points including:

The Mauryas, Muras, or Mors were Jats and hence Scythian or East Iranian in origin

The primordial Jat religion was that the original Iranian race

Jat clans with Iranian connection :

- Abra
- Burdak
- Dahiya
- Dhaka
- and
- Dheva
- The girl
- Bargains
- Hooda
- June
- Karpashv
- Karvir
- Khatkar
- Maderna
- Sends
- Mirdha
- Pachhande
- Palsania
- Pallawal
- Salar
- Singad
- Singala
- Then
- Tevatia

Jats around Lake Urmia :

Lake Urmia (Persian: *دریاچه اروم*) is a salt lake in northwestern Iran between the provinces of East Azarbaijan and West Azarbaijan, west of the southern portion of the similarly shaped Caspian Sea.

Lake Urmia has 102 islands. Their names are as follows: Arezu, Ashk ( Asiagh ), Espir, Kabudan ( Kudan ), Shahi ( Eslami ), Espiro, Espirak, Azin, Mehr ( Mehria ), Mehran ( Mehria ), Mehrdad ( Mehria ), Borzu ( Burzia ) , Borz ( Burzia ), Siyavash ( Siwach ), Siyah-Tappeh ( Shivi ), Tanjeh ( Tandi ), Tanjak ( Tandi ), Bon-Ashk ( Beniwal / Asiagh ), Ashksar ( Asiagh ),

Ashku ( Asiagh ), Chak-Tappeh , Day ( Dahiya ), Magh, Meydan ( Manda)), Cheshmeh-kenar ( Sheshma ), Miyaneh ( Mann ), Samani, Azar ( Ajra ), Sangan ( Sangwan ), Sangu ( Sangwan ), Tak ( Taank ), Jowzar ( Jhojhar ), Jovin ( Joon ), Jodarreh ( Jodia ) , Sepid ( Sepat ), Bastvar ( Bast ), Zirabeh, Bahram, Gorz, Ardeshir, Nahid ( Nahar ), Penhan, Shahin, Kenarak, Zartappeh ( Jat ), Khersak, Naviyan ( Nain ), Omid, Garivak ( Garwa ), Gordeh. ( Godhe ), Giv, Kalsang ( Kalasman ), Golgun ( Golyan ), Aram, Panah ( Pannu ), Kariveh ( Karvir ), Zagh ( Jangoon ), Meshkin, Sahran ( Saharan ), Pishva, Kam, Kameh, Soroush, Sorkh, Shabdiz, Nakhoda, Kuchek-Tappeh, Tus, Borzin, Arash, Atash. , Siyah-sang, Karkas ( Karkala ), Shurtappeh, Navi, Nahoft, Shush-Tappeh, Iran-Nezhad, Shamshiran, Mahdis, Kakayi-e Bala, Kakayi-ye Miyaneh, Kakayi-e Pain, Takht, Takhtan Takhar , Markid , Kaveh, Mahvar, Nadid, Kaman, Zarkaman, Zarkanak, Nahan ( Nain ), Bard ( Bardak ), Bardin ( Bardak ), Bardak ( Bardak ), Tir, Tashbal, Sarijeh, Bon ( Beniwal ), Kafchehnok.

These names indicate the place of origin of various Jat clans near Lake Urmia. The equivalent Jat clans are given in brackets.

### Jats in Shāhnāma :

Jats have been mentioned in Shāhnāma ("The epic of kings"), the national epic of Persia (modern Iran), by Hakīm Abul-Qāsim Firdawsī Tūsī (Persian: توسی یفردوس ابوالقاسم میحک), more commonly transliterated as Firdowsi (935–1020), the most revered Persian poet. The Shāhnāma tells the mythical and historical past of Iran from the creation of the world up until the Islamic conquest of Iran in the 7th century. The Shāhnameh recounts the history of Iran, beginning with the creation of the world and the introduction of the arts of civilization (fire, cooking, metallurgy, law) to the Aryans, and ends with the Arab conquest of Persia. The scene that has been drawn by Firdowsi in his Shahnama is in the legend of Rostam and Sohrab. Sohrab was in search of Rostam, his father. Both, the father and son had heard the heroic deeds of each other, but none of them wanted to disclose his identification. Sohrab, while being in search of his father leads his army to the White Castle (Dazh-e-Safid) in Iran. Hujir, guardian of the castle, sees the army come and goes to meet them. Shohrab asked Hujir about the heroes and war champions of Iran as under:

"I would ask all

About the king, the rebellions and the troops

All the renowned ones of that region

Such as Tus, Kaous and Gudarz

The knights and the valliants of the country of Iran

Like, Gostahm , and praiseworthy Giv

About Bahram , and the renowned Rostam

I ask you about every Jat, you count them for me"

Dr S.M. Yunus Jaffery writes that Firdowsi has used word Jat for those war-like persons, a word that seems to be equivalent of Yaudheyas that has been often used in the history of Kushan period. It should be pointed out here that the word Kushan has been used in Shahnama at several places. Tarikh-e-Bayhaqi, also called Tarikh-e-Masudi is history of Ghaznavid dynasty (366-582 AH/976-1186 AD). An extract from this book has been given in Loghat Nama-e-Dehkhoda, the encyclopedia of Persia, compiled by Ali Akbar Dehkhoda in Persia. Under the entry 'Jat' it says:

"Ahmad escaped with his nobles and other persons, who were three hundred riders and bigger convicts. But Telak remained with him. He wrote letters to Hindu rebellious Jats that they should not take the way of abjected ones."

Dr S.M. Yunus Jaffery writes that under the same entry, the quotation of Adib Peshawar has also been given. Probably he has written about the Jats in Afghanistan: "They are a clan of Hindus, now most of them have been honoured to adopt the Islamic faith. In the verbal history I have been told that people of Panni clan in Afghanistan are Jats in their origin. There are some small pockets of Jats in towns like Roudsar.

#### The Mandas in Iran - The First Historical Empire of Jats :

The ancient Mandas are even now a clan of the Jats in India. It is they who gave the first Historical Empire of the Jats in the western Plateau of Iran. They are named in the Puranas also. The Visnu Purana mentions them as Mandaks. By removing the Suffix "ka" the name appears in its old and present form. A country called Mandavya is mentioned in the Agni Puran. Sankhyan Aranyaka, too mentions these people and so does Varahmihir, who, in his Samhita, locates them in the north, as well as the northwest of India. Madaiya is their Persian name.

In the last quarter of the eighth century BC, the area of Azerbaijan to the south of Lake Urmia was inhabited by various Jat clans. The two clans whose names had come down in history are called the Mannai and the Mandas. These two clans are nowadays called in India as the Manns and the Mandas. In 720 BC or so, the Assyrian King, Sargon II, attacked these people and the Assyrians captured their chief called Dayaukku. He was a Manda chief and perhaps nature took a hand in saving his life, because contrary to the Assyrian custom, his life was not only spared but he was sent, along with his family to Hamath. Thus, it seems that before the last decade of the eighth century BC, they were acknowledging the suzerainty of Assyria, and it is mentioned that 22 of their chiefs swore the oath of allegiance before Sargon II. The name of their chief is given as Deiokes, son of Phraortes by Herodotus and other Greek writers. As per History of Persia, he was the same as the chief named by the Assyrians as Dayaukku. His name may well be Devak because the suffix 's' or 'us' is generally added to personal names by the Greeks. It was Devak, who established the first empire of the Manda Jats in about 700 BC. The later Achaemenian empire was an offshoot of Manda empire, because Cyrus the great, was an offshoot of Manda empire, as Cyrus the great, was son of Mandani, a daughter of the last Manda emperor. Cyrus the Great was an Achaemenid Persian, son of the local Persian king Cambyses I of Anshan and the Manda princess Mandane of Manda clan, who was the daughter of Astyages, the last Manda emperor. Before he united the Persians and Mandas under a single empire, he was the ruler of

Anshān, then a vassal kingdom of the Median Empire, in what is now part of Fars Province in southern Iran. The name of the queen was Aryenis (skt. Aryani).

### The Manda Empire :

Up to the nineteenth century, this brilliant empire was called the "Empire of the Medes". It was so called by the Greek writers as well as in the Old Testament. The country of the Medes, called Media was the northwestern neighbour of the Mandas - the actual name of the empire builders. Even Media was eventually annexed to the empire of Manda. This was perhaps the reason of the serious mistake of history where the Mandas and the Medes were confused with each other. The Medes were traders of Greek stock, and were living in small principalities. They never had any empire. Confounding the brave Mandas with the effete Medes was the most unfortunate event in history. The mistake became so prevalent that even a proverb was invented in English equal to the effect that a certain thing is as unchangeable as the laws of Medes and Persians. The mistake was detected when the monuments of Nabonodus and Cyrus were unearthed. It was then discovered that the whole history was based upon a philological mistake. It was found that the name of the empire and its people, was not Medes but Manda.

The founder of the empire, Deiokes, hereinafter mentioned as Devak, immediately formed a powerful army. When the country was secure, he decided to build his capital for which the mighty granite range of mount Alvand was selected and at a height of 6,000 ft. above sea level, the capital of Ecbatana was built. Its present site is the eastern part of modern Hamadan.

After these preparations, Devak started expansion of his empire. The Assyrians could never have dreamt that this mountain shepherd at no distant date, would sack the great Nineveh and cause the name of Assyria to disappear from amongst the nations of the world. The adjoining areas were annexed to the Manda Empire and after consolidating it for 50 years, Devak was succeeded by his son Fravarti, the Phraortes of the Greeks in 655 BC. The Persians were the first to be conquered. Gaining more than self-confidence from their successes, the Mandas attacked the Assyrian empire but were defeated and Fravarti himself was killed.

Assurbanipal died in 626 BC, and his successors were disputing the throne. Such an opportunity was not to be lost and second attack of Nineveh began. The Assyrian Emperor burnt himself in his palace and perished with his family. Thus in 606 BC, Nineveh fell and so utter was its ruin that the Assyrian name was forgotten and the history of their empire soon melted into fable.

Armenia and Cappadocia were including in the Manda Empire. Lydia was emerging as a powerful nation in the west and it was inevitable that the two powers should collide. The war began but in 585 BC, when there was a total eclipse of the sun; and it was stopped after six years of fighting, under a peace treaty. A daughter of the Lydian emperor was married to the heir apparent of Manda, and the kingdom Urartu was annexed to Manda empire. Next year, i.e. 584 BC, this great emperor died. Thus, from a beaten nation he raised the Mandas into the most powerful and virile empire of that time. It is aptly stated that the east was Semitic when he began to rule but it was Aryan when he stopped. This leader in one of the great moments in history was succeeded by Ishtuvegu, Astyages of the Greeks. He was an unworthy son of a

worthy father, and he deviated from the basic policy of the Mandas, i.e. to keep fit and ready for war. He had no son and his daughter named Mandani (after the clan name) was married to a small vassal prince of Elam.

The first issued of princess Mandani was Cyrus who became the emperor, after putting in prison his maternal grandfather, Ishtuvegu. Three battles were fought, as per traditions preserved by the classical writers, before Ecbatana itself fell in 550 BC. Cyrus was emperor of Persia and had inherited the empire of the Mandas, which was further extended by him. But this does not mean that efforts were not made to recover the lost empire. We hear that Cyrus himself fought wars against the Jats in Balakh and the Caspian sea. At both the places he was unsuccessful. Balakh remained under the Kangs, and the small kingdom of the Massagete ruled over by the Dahias, remained free and independent. The king of the Massagete kingdom was Armogha and his queen was simply called Tomyris which is a Scythian word, Tomuri, meaning queen. The king had died and the queen had taken the administration in her hands when Cyrus the Great asked her to marry him.

The queen gathered her force and the battle which followed was most ferocious. On both sides there were Jats, and they fought to the finish. Herodotus says that of all the wars of antiquity, this was the most bloody. The Jats gained complete and final victory. Cyrus himself was killed. His body was searched and recovered from the battlefield.

Thus, we see that many Jat kingdoms in the north and east were free of the Persian empire which was an offshoot of the earlier Manda Jat empire. The defeat of Cyrus the Great and his death was a signal for the Jats under Persian Empire to take up the throne of Ecbatana. This was done by the Jats under their leader Gaumata. In the meantime Darius came and this second empire lasted for only six months because conspirators in the pay of Darius killed Gaumata in the Sokhyavati palace of Ecbatana. Darius wrote in his inscriptions, "Ahuramazda made myself emperor. Our dynasty had lost the empire, but I restored it to its original position. I re-established sacred places destroyed by Magas." These Magas were the Magian priests of the Jat emperors who came to India along with them, as a result of war. They were called in India, the Magas. The Taga Brahmins on the Yamuna river are their descendants. They are the Tagazgez of Masoudi.

But the efforts did not cease there. In 519 BC Phravarti, another Manda follower of the Sun God of the Magi priests, fought for the lost empire. The Virks revolted in Hyrcania. But Darius, aptly called great, suppressed them and except lands on the frontiers of the empire. The Kangs remained free in north of Oxus river; and the Scythian Jats on the Danube were free. Infact, Darius, too attacked these invincible people with very large army and huge preparations of every short. At last, Darius ordered on immediate withdrawal and returned to Persia.

#### Mandas and other Jats came to India :

It was a result of these wars that the first migration of the Jats took place, and from the Manda Empire and from other parts of Central Asia they came to India. That is why Panini mentioned many cities of theirs in the heart of Punjab in the fifth century BC. But memories die hard. Even today, we have our villages named after the cities lost in Iran. The names like Elam, Batana, Susana, Baga, Kharkhoda (Manda Kurukada), etc. are still the names of Jat



village. It is these Jats whom Buddha Prakash Calls, "exotic and outlandish people" who came to Indian at the time of successors of Cyrus, and whom Jean Przyluski calls the Bahlikas from Iran and Central Aisa.

#### Mandas in Sixth century :

Mandas in the later period are found settled in Punjab and Sindh in sixth/seventh centuries AD. Ibn Haukal says that "the infidels who inhabited Sindh, are called Budha and Mand." "The Mands dwell on the banks of Mihran (Sindhu) river. From the boundary of Multan to the sea... They form a large population.

Sir H. M. Elliot writes that The city of Fámhal is on the borders of Hind, towards Saimúr, and the country between those two places belongs to Hind. The countries between Fámhal and Makrán, and Budha, and beyond it as far as the borders of Multán, are all dependencies of Sind. The infidels who inhabit Sind are called Budha and Mand. They reside in the tract between Túrán, Multán, and Mansúra, to the west of the Mihrán. They breed camels, which are sought after in Khurásán and elsewhere, for the purpose of having crosses from those of Bactria.

That city where the Budhites carry on their trade is Kandábíl, and they resemble men of the desert. They live in houses made of reeds and grass. The Mands dwell on the banks of the Mihrán, from the boundary of Multán to the sea, and in the desert between Makrán and Fámhal. They have many cattle sheds and pasturages, and form a large population.

#### Source :

<https://www.jatland.com/home/Iran>

### **33. Parsi communities early history :**

#### Parsi Communities :

##### i. Early History :

*Qessa-ye Sanjān* (The Story of Sanjān). Iranians have been involved in trade with India from Achaemenid times, but the creation of a Parsi settlement in India was the outcome of the migration of Zoroastrian refugees from their original homeland in medieval Islamic Persia. There is debate over the exact date of this exodus: 716 CE (S. K. Hodivala, 1927, Chap. 1), 775 (Seervai and Patel), 780s (*Qessa*; all quotations from this source are taken from Eduljee's translation), 785 (Modi, 1905, pp. 1-11), and 936 (S. H. Hodivala, pp. 1-11) have been variously cited. The variations are due to the fact that the only source, the *Qessa-ye Sanjān* does not give precise dates but rather uses round figures (e.g., "In this way three hundred years, more or less, elapsed ... in this way another two centuries passed by ... In this way seven hundred years passed by," *Qessa*, tr., pp. 53-54). Furthermore, these are dates between events not all of which can be confidently identified. There is also a further overriding problem. The *Qessa* states that it was written down in 1600, based on oral tradition and it must therefore be used with due caution and appropriate allowances as a historical source,

given the way it was composed and transmitted (Stausberg, 2002, I, pp. 375-98; Nanji and Dhalla, pp. 35-58).

The *Qessa* is, however, important as an indicator of the Parsis' own perception of their settlement in India. The account of the exodus begins by describing how a group of devout Zoroastrians in Persia went into hiding in the mountains during a time of fierce Islamic persecution. After a hundred years they moved on to Hormuz, but still remained under threat of oppression. "At last a wise dastur, who was also an astrologer, read the stars and said: 'The time Fate had allotted us in this place is now coming to an end, we must go at once to India.'"

They sailed to Diu in western India, where they settled for nineteen years: "[t]hen a priest-astrologer, after reading the stars, said to them: 'Our destiny lies elsewhere, we must leave Diu and seek another place of refuge.'" But a storm came while they were at sea, endangering their lives, so they prayed "O Almighty God! Help us to get out of this danger. O Victorious Bahrām! Come to our aid" and they vowed to consecrate a Bahrām fire if they arrived safely in India. "Their prayers were heard; the victorious fire of Bahrām abated the storm," so they arrived safely in India (*Qessa*, tr., pp. 49-50). There they sought permission to settle from the local ruler, Jadi Rana. He asked for an account of their religion and laid down four pre-conditions before agreeing to grant them sanctuary: They should use only the local language, the women should adopt the local dress, they must put down their weapons and vow never to use them and, finally, their marriage ceremonies should be conducted only in the evening; the dastur agreed. In his account of their religion he emphasized the features that accorded with Hinduism, for instance, reverence for the sun and the moon, fire and water, and the cow. He also stressed that their women observed strict purity laws.

In short, the settlement in India was written in the stars, their safe arrival was due to divine aid, and they were not asked to forsake any significant aspects of their religion; indeed Zoroastrianism shared much in common with that of the Hindus. Oral tradition relates that Jadi Rana felt apprehensive about granting sanctuary to people of such warrior-like appearance, but the priests convinced the king that they would be 'like sugar in a full cup of milk, adding sweetness but not causing it to overflow' (a variant relates the placing of a gold ring in the cup of milk; see Axelrod). Tradition states that the Parsi affirmations of their religion were delivered in sixteen statements (Skt. *śloka*s; though the oldest manuscripts date from the 17th century; *Qessa*, tr., pp. 60-80).

They emphasized the points where their religion was consistent with Hindu tradition, but some details do not reflect Hindu practice; for example, there was no reason why weddings should be held at night. It has, therefore, been plausibly argued (Edujlee, 1995, pp. 60-70) that these traditions seek to explain why certain Parsi practices have evolved by imbuing them with an aura of historical legitimacy and authority, harking back to the covenant reached with the Hindu ruler when they first settled in India.

The *Qessa* outlines the common Parsi perception of the pattern of their settlement in western India. After some time the settlers approached the king for permission to build a temple to house their most sacred grade of fire, an *Ātaš Bahrām* (see *ĀTAŠ*). He consented and gave them suitable land. The history of that fire, known as *Irān-šāh*, their "king of Iran" in exile, is central to much subsequent Parsi history. The legend states that "three hundred years more or less" elapsed while the Parsis settled in peace in Sanjān and beyond. Then the Ghaznavid ruler,

Sultan Mahmud, pledged to add Sanjān to his kingdom. His army advanced on Sanjān "like a black cloud." The Parsis stood alongside the Hindus. The battle is depicted in epic style. The sultan's forces included not only horsemen but elephants "the plain was distressed by the weight of the elephants Day and night the battle raged. The two leaders were as dragons, struggling with each other with the fury of tigers. The sky was covered with a dark cloud from which rained swords, arrows, and spears. The dead lay in heaps and the dying got no succor - such was Fate's grim decree." The battle went against the Hindus, who fled, but the Parsis stood firm and after three days the Muslim forces withdrew, before returning the following day with reinforcements. The Parsi leader, Ardašir, rushed on to the field like a lion and roared out a challenge. A Muslim knight "... riding a swift horse, charged at Ardašir with his lance ... the two warriors were locked in combat. The two fought like lions ... Ardašir managed to ... drag him down, and then he cut off his head." Then the Muslim reinforcements charged. "The din of clashing swords rose above the land, waves of blood flowed over the field like a river." Ardašir was struck by an arrow, "blood poured out of his wound; weakened, he fell from his horse and died. When tragedy beckons even marble becomes soft as wax" (*Qessa*, tr., pp. 54-56). The Hindu-Parsi alliance was defeated and Muslims ruled the land. Various Parsi scholars have attempted to identify this invasion with known external history, but with no clear conclusion (S. H. Hodivala, 1920, pp. 37-66).

Perhaps the significant aspect of the story is not its debatable historical significance and plausibility, but rather the literary manner in which it invokes imagery from the *Šāh-nāma*, and particularly the way the heroic figure of Rostam is evoked in the description of Ardašir (Williams, pp. 15-34).

The *Qessa* then focuses on the story of the sacred fire, Irān-šāh. Fearing for its safety in the face of the Muslim invasion of Sanjān, Parsi priests took it to the mountain of Bahrot, south of Sanjān, and hid it in a cave for twelve years before taking it to the village of Bansda; the dates are again disputed. Jivanji J. Modi (1905, pp. 1-13) dates the sack at 1490, while Shapurshah Hodivala puts it before 1478, probably 1465 (pp. 42-46; see also pp. 56-57 on a possible external account of the stay at Bahrot). There were two major Muslim conquests of Gujarat in the approximate period referred to in the *Qessa*, in 1465 and 1572; it is not clear which of the two dates is relevant. Because the route to Bansda was impassable during monsoons, Irān-šāh was eventually moved to Navsari at the behest of a legendary leader, Chāngā Āsā. The date is again a matter of debate. H. E. Eduljee considers it one of the few fixed dates in Parsi history, namely 1419.

The first *rivayat* (*rewāyat*; see below), that of Nariman Hōšang in 1478, explicitly refers to Chāngā Āsā as leader in Navsari and his achievement in obtaining relief from the *jezya* (the poll tax levied on non-Muslims), but there is no mention of the transfer of Irān-šāh to Navsari through his proposal, a momentous event which would have been mentioned if it had occurred by then (*Qessa*, tr., p. 19; S. H. Hodivala, 1920, pp. 18-36, supported by Patel; for the translation of the passage on Chāngā Āsā, see Dhabhar, p. 600). There is a hint that it had been installed in Navsari by the time of the second *rivayat*, often referred to also as the *rivayat* of Nariman Hōšang (though he is not said to be the bearer of the letter) dated 1480 or 1485 (Paymaster, 1954, p. 67, following Hodivala). In short it seems that the Irān-šāh was moved to Navsari sometime in the late 15th century, and that a precise date cannot be given. This does not bring into question the basic narrative that the Parsis settled in the northwest coast sometime in the first millennium, that they consecrated a fire of the highest grade, and that

they were threatened by Muslim conquest, which forced them to take the fire into hiding before establishing it at Navsari. Such events shape community identity and their memory is generally carefully preserved, but precisely because of their importance the stories can be subject to later “elucidation.” Sanjān was at the turn of the millennium a thriving port, and it is plausible that it was a major Parsi settlement as the *Qessa* indicates. It was from there, for example, that the Navsari community first called for priests in 1142 (*Qessa*, tr., pp. 87-88, argues for an earlier date; see S. H. Hodivala, p. 82, for a slightly later date, namely 1182, see also Kameronkar and Dhunjisha), but the community there disappears from Parsi history after the “sack” of Sanjān.

*Early Parsi settlements in Gujarat.* The *Qessa* outlines the dispersal of Parsis around Gujarat. It has generally been interpreted as indicating a migration from Sanjān northwards to Broach (Bharuch), Navsari, Ankleshwar, and Cambay, but, as Eduljee points out (Eduljee, 1991, p. 42), the *Qessa* does not claim that it relates the only migration of Zoroastrians from Persia. The early settlements were in locations with harbors, some of which could accommodate large ships that crossed the oceans, for example Cambay and Broach, while others, such as Navsari, were harbors used by ships pursuing the coastal trade. The sea-borne trade between western India and the Persian Gulf (and to East Africa and China) dated back centuries (Kearney). The Parsi migrants were not therefore venturing into unknown territory, but to a region with which Iranians had long traded. It is plausible that there were several groups who migrated over the years. As noted below, there were a variety of traditions about the settlement in the early 17th century.

The *Qessa-ye Sanjān* is the tradition that has become the focus of communal and consequently academic attention and should be viewed, as convincingly demonstrated by Susan Stiles Maneck (pp. 127-29) and Michael Stausberg (2002, I, pp. 277-88), not primarily as a historical source but as an example of a particular genre of Persian poetic literature (it is composed in Persian couplets), with theological and apocalyptic overtones that owe much to Islamic convention, especially in the opening doxology, the praise to God “the Giver, the Merciful, the Just You have made Adam out of clay” (*Qessa*, tr., p. 47).

There are a number of hints about early Parsi settlements in a range of sources, some Muslim, some notes on old manuscripts, and some early buildings. An extensive collection of such notes is in Seervai and Patel (see also Mirza, pp. 242-47; Paymaster, 1954, pp. 85-91). Some of the earliest are: the Kenheri cave inscriptions of 1009 CE; reports of the presence of Parsi traders in Cambay in the 11th century; the settlement in Navsari, which is said to date from 1142; and a copy of the *Vendidād* made in Ankleshwar in 1258. A new *da□-ma* (see CORPSE) was built near Broach in 1309 because the old one (undated) was dilapidated (Patel, p. 2). Some grants of land were made to Parsis around Thana in the 11th century, and there is a communal memory and ritual recall of a Parsi massacre at Variav in the 12th century (though the legend takes various forms, see *Qessa*, tr., pp. 100-5). With such fragmentary evidence it is difficult to plot a coherent chronological history.

There are indications of Iranian Zoroastrians in India about whose history we know little. In the 19th century some western academics and Parsis were excited by what were first thought to be long lost ancient Zoroastrian mystical texts, the *Dabestān-e madāheb* and *Dasātīr*. They were soon shown to be modern texts reflecting the beliefs of some Zoroastrians interested in Sufism and Hindu and Buddhist mysticism. The *Dabestān* relates that it was the product of one

Dastur Ādar Kayvān (see ĀZAR KAYVĀN) and some of his followers. He settled in Patna in his later years and died there in 1617-18. It is not implausible that other Zoroastrians interested in mysticism might also have traveled to India, not only to escape persecution but also in search of enlightenment (Modi, 1932b; Stiles Maneck, pp. 129-45; Ādar Kayvān, tr. 1937).

*The Rivayats.* Chāngā Āsā, credited with the bringing of the fire to Navsari, was a pioneer in another important development in Parsi history. Conscious of the lack of ritual knowledge in his community, and supported by leading Parsis in Surat and other centers, he arranged for a Zoroastrian layman (behdin) of Broach, Nariman Hōšang, to go and seek guidance from the Zoroastrian authorities (dastur) in Yazd and Kermān. He appears to have gone without any letters of introduction, indeed with no knowledge of Persian, so he spent a year in Yazd learning the language while earning a living by trading in dates. The reply he brought back in 1478 was addressed to Chāngā Āsā, as well as to the leaders of the various settlements (S. H. Hodivala, 1920, pp. 276-349; Dhabhar; Paymaster, 1954, pp. 66-84).

Of the 26 *Rivayats* written between 1478 and 1773, 13 were written before 1600, an era otherwise sadly lacking in sources on Parsi history. The *Rivayats* provide information not only on Zoroastrian belief and practice, but also offer a glimpse into the conditions experienced by Iranian Zoroastrians. They were concerned with the Parsis' lack of knowledge and urged them to send two priests (*ērvad*; see HĒRBED) to Iran to study the religion, as they themselves suffered from a shortage of priests and could not spare any of their own to be dispatched to India. They praised Chāngā Āsā for negotiating freedom from the poll tax for Navsari Parsis. Sanjān is not named among the settlements greeted in the *Rivayat*, presumably indicating that the Parsis had moved on. Certain Indian centers were mentioned regularly in the *Rivayats*, namely Navsari (which had always the largest number of people addressed), Surat, Ankleshwar, Broach, and Cambay (or Khambat).

It is a feasible that these were regarded as the main Parsi settlements at the time (Dhabhar, pp. 595-606). A *Rivayat* sent in 1511 expresses regret that Iranian Zoroastrians had been unaware of their co-religionists in India, despite the earlier *Rivayats*. The Iranian Zoroastrians sent manuscripts of various Zoroastrian texts to India. The signatories of the *Rivayats* were from Torkābād, Šarifābād, Khorasan, Sistān, and Kermān. A common theme in several *Rivayats* is the terrible hardships suffered by Iranian Zoroastrians, who interpreted their suffering as signs of the final assault of evil before a savior would come and the renovation commence. In contrast, the Parsis were beginning to occupy important social positions such as *patels* or *desais* (village leaders and tax officers). The period of Mughal rule (1573-1660) was a time of relative peace and security, in contrast to the earlier period of oppressive rule from the Delhi Sultanate (13th-15th cent.).

*Early religious organization.* Over the years a system of ministerial districts (*panthak*) was established, allocating different areas to the religious care of specified priestly lineages. We do not have a precise date when these agreements were reached. The oldest manuscript detailing them is dated 1543 (Sanjana, pp. 98-99). The Panthaks were: (1) Sanjān between the rivers Pardi to Dahanu (nowadays based in Udwarda); (2) Navsari between the rivers Pardi to Variav and the River Tapti; (3) Godavra, from Variav to River Narmada near Broach; (4) Pahruc from Ankleshwar to Cambay; and (5) Cambay. Some of the regions, for instance, Sanjān and Navsari, long predate that period. As the Parsis moved around the region, disputes, sometimes violent, erupted over priestly rights and privileges.

The transferring of the sacred fire (*ātaš*) from Bansda was greeted with joy in Navsari, but it resulted in what might be called substantial “ecclesiastical problems.” The families of priests who had tended the sacred fire from its consecration in Sanjān came with it to Navsari. The initial agreement was that only the “Sanjanas” (priests from Sanjān) should tend to the sacred fire and all other family rites in the town should be performed by the resident priests of Navsari, the Bhagarsaths (the sharers, i.e., of the priestly duties that the original priests sent from Sanjān had shared among themselves, see S. K. Hodivala, 1927, chs. 6-8; Kanga, pp. 2-22). The problem was a delicate one, because Parsi priests then (and now) are not paid a salary for rites performed. When the lay people of Navsari requested Sanjana priests to perform their family ceremonies, bitter disputes arose. In September 1686, seven Bhagaria *behdins* and two Sanjana *mobads* were killed. The *behdins* took one Bhagaria, Minocher Homji, into their fold and established a dar-e mehr in his home (which is still known as Minocher Homji Agiary; see Jamasp Ashana, pp. 1-31; Patel, p. 5).

It was a long-lasting conflict involving appeals to secular courts. Eventually it led to the moving of the sacred fire, which had been temporarily moved to fortified Surat 1733-36, because of Marathi Pindari invasion, and from Navsari to Bulsar in 1740, the date established by Shapurji Hodivala (1927, pp. 288-89, in contrast to Patel) on the basis of the date of the permission (*parvāna*) given by the Gāēkwād/Gāēkwār (ruler of Baroda) to move the sacred Irān-šāh. At Bulsar the sacred fire was kept in the house of a priest, since there was no special building, for approximately two years. Despite an appeal in 1741 for it to be returned to Navsari, it was taken in 1742 to the village of Udwada, which was in the Sanjana Panthak, but with a second line of dasturs representing the lineage of the two priests who brought the fire to Udwada (S. K. Hodivala, 1927, pp. 259-344). There had been a Parsi community at Udwada beforehand, for it had a *dak-ma* built in 1697 (Patel, 1906, p. 5), but it appears to have been a poor community. There was some rivalry with the larger community in Bulsar (S. H. Hodivala, 1920, pp. 307 ff.).

### Parsis in the 17th century :

Up to the 17th century, sources offer only fragmentary information, but then, with the arrival of various European powers, a number of external accounts of the Parsis appeared, and the Parsis themselves began to keep more records. There were two earlier Western reports by the friars Jordanus in 1322 and Odoric de Pordenone in 1325, but they give scant detail. Although records increase, problems of history remain. The political situation in western India was complex. Mainly to the north were the Muslim powers, and from the south came Hindu Marathas. Their conflict ebbed and flowed so that territories changed hands several times, especially trading centers like Surat, where there was a growing number of Parsis. The situation was complicated by the rivalry between Western powers. By 1558 the Portuguese dominated an area of some thousand square miles in northwest India. Under Portuguese rule Parsis became traders and are mentioned by Portuguese writers (Firby, pp. 89-116). By 1600 the Portuguese were rivaled by the Dutch and the French and in the 17th century by the British, especially in Surat, a port of increasing importance and a meeting point for traders and the Parsis.

Father Anthony Monserrate was a Portuguese Jesuit who encountered Parsis on his journey through Gujarat to visit Akbar, the Mughal emperor, in Fatipur Sikri around 1580-83. He commented on their base in Navsari and noted their Persian ancestry. Like other Portuguese,

he compared the Parsis to Jews “[i]n colour they are white but are extremely similar to the Jews in the rest of their physical and mental characteristics, in their dress and in their religion” (Firby, p. 91). He evidently had heard of some of the apocalyptic beliefs of Zoroastrians. He gave a reasonably accurate account of the *sodra* and *kosti* (sacred shirt and the girdle cord invested with when being initiated into the religion), described Parsi funeral practices, noted their reverence for the fire and the sun, and commented on their festivals.

The first Englishman to refer to the Parsis was John Jourdain (ca. 1572-1619), a former merchant navy officer and an employee of the newly established East India Company. In 1609 he and the rest of the ship’s company were shipwrecked near Gandevi and made their way via Navsari (he refers to the *Ātaš Bahrām*) on to Surat. Writing of the Parsis in Navsari, he wrote “In this towne there are manie of a strange Kinde of religion called Parsyes. These people are very tall of stature and white people. Their religion is farre different from the Moores or Banians for they do adore the fire, and doe contynuallie keepe their fire burninge for devotion thinkinge that if the fire should goe out, that the world weare at an end” (Firby, p. 91). The comment that Parsis were white is a theme followed by several later travelers.

In 1616 Edward Terry (1589/90-1660) became chaplain to Sir Thomas Roe, the British ambassador, who was seeking trading opportunities in India from the Emperor Jahāngir, Terry’s account of the Parsis was written in 1625 and an expanded edition appeared in 1665. One of the two main European travelers’ accounts was that of Henry Lord (b. 1563) who was chaplain at Surat in 1625-29. Lord wrote a book, the first part of which is on the *banians* (Hindu traders) and the second on “the Persees.” Lord is noteworthy for his use of Zoroastrian texts, and he relates that he was instructed by a Parsi priest. Although some of his account is inaccurate (e.g., he thought Zoroaster had come from China), he was writing only twenty years after the *Qessa-ye Sanjān* had been written, making him almost a contemporary of what is seen as the key source for early Parsi history.

Much of his description of the community is perceptive. According to Lord, the original settlers arrived in seven ships at Suwali (the port down the River Tapti from Surat where ocean going vessels docked); another landed nearby at “Baryaw,” but all were killed by a conquering Rajah (presumably a reference to the Variav massacre mentioned above); five landed at Navsari and the last group landed at Cambay. His account of the Zoroastrian creation story (see COSMOGONY AND COSMOLOGY i.), though couched in biblical language, is broadly accurate; his account of the legends concerning the life of Zoroaster is fairly traditional (e.g., the account of the prophet laughing at birth). His description of the priesthood displays respect for their values, as does his account of their ceremonies, especially their attitude to the sacred fire and funeral practices.

The next two travelers to comment briefly on the Parsis were Thomas Herbert (Surat, 1629, he explicitly used Lord) and Peter Mundy (Surat, 1650s). Nora Firby notes that subsequent British travelers’ accounts fall silent until the Restoration of Charles II and the British acquisition of Bombay (1662). Firby then, for the first time in the study of travelers’ accounts of the Parsis, drew attention to W. Geleynssen de Jongh, who took charge of the Dutch factory at Broach in 1625. His account (tr. by Kreyenbroek, in Firby, pp. 183-93) is more comprehensive and probably more accurate than other 17th-century sources. He described the towns of Broach, Baroda, Cambay, and Ahmadabad.

The sources on which he based his account were largely from Broach, a city neglected by historians, yet clearly important in Parsi history prior to the rise of Navsari. Geleynssen stated that 18,000 Parsis arrived in fifteen ships, with eight landing at Sanjān and seven at Cambay, further evidence of early 17th-century interest in the Parsi settlement in India. Geleynssen said that Parsis were to be found in many trades as merchants, shopkeepers, craftsmen, agriculturalists, and especially in the toddy trade (a drink from the sap of several species of palm which yields a potent brew). More than his contemporaries, he emphasized the role of the Parsis in the sea borne trade of Gujarat. As a merchant, his account of Parsi beliefs and practices betrays less theological bias than those of clerical writers such as Terry and Lord. He appears not to have seen fire temples, although he had heard of the Ātaš Bahrām at Navsari. His account of the funerals is well informed. Generally, he writes positively about the Parsis, commending their high ethical standards. His account of their theology, calendars, dress, domestic worship, and social customs is also informed and extensive.

Other 17th-century travelers to comment on the Parsis were Niccolo Manucci (1639-1717) who arrived in Surat 1656 and spent most of his life in Delhi, visiting Surat occasionally; Gerald Aungier (d. 1677), an early Governor in Bombay in 1669 who encouraged Parsis to settle in the new center; his Factor, Streynsham Master (1671-72), also comments on the sacred fire at Navsari and on a temple in Surat); John Ovington, who arrived in Bombay in 1689 and spent three years in Surat and gave a mostly sympathetic account of Parsi beliefs and practices. Ovington emphasized their charitable work "to such as are Infirm and Miserable; leave no Man destitute of Relief nor suffer a Beggar in their Tribe ... They are the principal Men at the loom in all the country" (Hinnells, 2000, pp. 117-39, esp. p. 127). The last traveler of the century was Alexander Hamilton (b. before 1688, d. in or after 1733), who arrived in Surat the same year as Ovington and used it as his base for trade as a merchant captain until 1725. His account of the trades that the Parsis were engaged in (ship building, weaving, ivory, agate, cabinet makers and toddy production) is particularly useful.

Thus, in nearly a thousand years the Parsis gradually migrated around Gujarat, with their main centers in Sanjān, Broach, Navsari, and Surat. Themes commonly noted by travelers were the Parsis' distinctiveness among India's races, their resemblance to white Europeans and Jews, their funeral and devotional practices associated with the fire, their charitable nature, and their involvement in textile production.

#### Parsis in the Mofussil from the 18th Century :

The British took possession of Bombay in 1662 but for the following hundred years Bombay remained relatively marginal to the East India Company's concerns. For the first seventy years, Portuguese influence remained strong, for example, in the use of their language and currency. Pirates at sea undermined its role as a port; the original seven marshy islands were unhealthy. Gradually the silting up of the port of Surat, the building of the dockyard in Bombay, and the political turmoil of the mainland with the battles between the Marathas and the Muslim powers, as well as European rivalries, led to the emergence of Bombay as the commercial capital of western India in the 19th century (Guha, 1982, pp. 2-8). The situation of the Zoroastrians in Bombay has been discussed in another entry (see BOMBAY i. THE ZOROASTRIAN COMMUNITY); here the focus will be on Zoroastrians in India outside this major emerging city.



*N avsari*. Although Sanjān occupied a prominent role in the early history of the Parsis, Navsari was to rise to a position of religious pre-eminence. The first temple is reputed to have been built there in 1142. From approximately 1300 CE and for about two hundred years, there was political oppression and persecution in the Navsari by Muslim rulers from Delhi (Kamerkar and Dhunjisha, pp. 42-44). In 1531 Maneck Chāngā, son of Chāngā Āsā, built a *da□-ma* there (Palsetia, p. 10). One of the Navsari notables to whom *Rivayats* were sent was Rana Jesang, who, indeed, was the first named in the sixth and seventh *Rivayats* (dated 1520 and 1535, respectively). From records of land sales we learn that he purchased substantial properties. He was descended from the first priest to come to Navsari, namely Kamdin Zarthosht, and was himself a learned priest, authoring several books.

His son, Meherji Rana, became a pivotal figure in Parsi priestly history. On his father's death he became the senior priest in Navsari, witnessed by some judgments written in his own hand. In 1573 Emperor Akbar conquered Surat, so acquiring parts of coastal Gujarat, including Navsari (Stiles Maneck, pp. 93-106). After his victory he met Meherji Rana and subsequently invited him to the court to give an account of his religion (1577-78). Akbar took an active interest in the religions in his realm and invited the leaders of each to come and inform him about their religion; Meherji Rana was asked to expound on Zoroastrianism. Tradition relates that Akbar was impressed and took the fire as the symbol of holiness in his court. Further, he used the Zoroastrian calendar as an official court calendar. Some Parsi commentaries claim that Akbar was converted and wore the *sodra* and *kosti*, but he was a noted syncretist and it seems unlikely he took up Zoroastrianism to any serious extent. Nevertheless, he clearly respected Meherji Rana and rewarded him generously with a grant of land near Navsari. On his return home, he was feted as a hero, formally declared to be the senior dastur, and was given more land. The acclaim he received reinforced Navsari's standing as the main religious center of the Parsis in the 16th century (Stiles Maneck, pp. 93-129; Modi, 1903; Paymaster, 1954, pp. 113-21).

Later, Akbar invited Dastur Ardašir Noširvān Kermāni from Persia to help produce a Persian lexicon. The relative influence of the two Zoroastrians is unknown, but it is said to have been a factor in developing further contacts between Zoroastrians in the two countries, for Dastur Noshirvān Kermāni is said to have written to Dastur Kamdin Padam of Broach encouraging him to visit Persia (Mirza, p. 244).

Navsari gradually emerged as the center of Parsi religious authority in 17th-century India. It replaced Sanjān as the base from which priests were sent to Parsi communities elsewhere. For example, in 1543 both the Bhagaria and the Sanjana priests of Navsari sent *mobaads* to work in the region of Damaun and in 1580 to Diu (Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 8-9). It was also the location of one of the oldest and most revered *agiāris* (lit. the place of fire), the Vadi dar-e mehr. Its early history is unknown, but it was rebuilt in 1588 (Patel, 1906, p. 3), and again in 1795 and 1851.

Navsari is the seat of a senior priestly lineage, the Bhagarias, with Dastur Meherji Rana as their leader (Stiles Maneck, pp. 80-85). It has long been a center of religious learning. In the 16th century, it had a center where Zoroastrian manuscripts were copied and translations made into Gujarati. The priests were affluent, buying and selling land. In 1627 the priests received copies of the *Vištāsp Yašt* and *Visperad* from Persia; Dastur Asdin Kaka (d. 1638) was

one of the early scholars (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 13), and in 1693 the ancestor of the JamaspAsa high priestly family was born there.

Dastur Jamasp Asha (b. 1693) had a thirst for knowledge but faced many struggles. He studied Persian, Sanskrit, and astrology from a pundit but he wanted also to learn Zand/ Pahlavi and so he went to Broach to study with Jamshid Kamdin (Jamasp Ashana, pp. 4-22). He had, however, done this against his father's will and consequently had no funds even to buy oil for lamps to read by. A sympathetic Hindu in Broach allowed him to sit and read while his shop was open before he became well known in Broach literary circles. He read from the *Šāh-nāma* for the Nawab until a jealous Maulvi (Moslem scholar) condemned the reading of the *Šāh-nāma* and Dastur Jamasp Asha lost his position. He returned to Navsari in 1719. The leading priests of the time were reluctant to provide the *behdins* with translations, but he had no such hesitation and produced Gujarati translations of five *gāhs* and some *Yašts*. This made him controversial, as did his teaching on laying out the corpse with *padān* (the mask worn over the mouth by priests to avoid defiling the sacred fire in the sanctuary), and the celebration of the *Gatha* days (the five Gathic days added to the last month of the year; see CALENDARS i.), and his belief that *behdins* should be allowed to study and, if knowledgeable, become dasturs. When Dastur Jamasp Velāyati arrived in Surat in 1721, Dastur Jamaspji and two other dasturs went to study with him.

When Dastur Velāyati left, he pronounced Dastur Jamasp Asha to be the most perceptive and presented him with copies of two Pahlavi texts. From that time, he was thought of as senior among Navsari's dasturs. Several other dasturs, including some from the Sanjana and Meherji Rana families, studied under him. Among those who acclaimed his knowledge were Dastur Mulla Bin Kaus and later Martin Haug. Dastur Jamasp Asha collected a library of manuscripts that his three sons (Dastur Noshirwanji Jamaspji of Poona, Dastur Jamshedji Jamaspji of Bombay, and Dastur Khurshed Jambudji of Mhow) divided between themselves. He died at the age of sixty in 1753 (Jamasp Ashana, pp. 4-22).

The most scholarly of the sons was Jamshedji Jamaspji. He created some controversy by arguing against the consecration of the Ātaš Bahrām in Navsari after Irān-šāh had been moved to Udwada. He refused to attend the inaugural celebration (*jašan*) but gave a lecture on fire afterwards, which brought him much acclaim. He was also well regarded by the Gāēkwād, to whom he recited the *Šāh-nāma*, but court pundits attacked him because he ate meat and drank liquor. They proposed, and the Gāēkwād accepted, that there should be the challenge of a debate, which Dastur Jamaspji won, thereby earning himself recognition as a pundit. In 1781 he traveled on foot to Bombay where he was again held in high esteem, directing the consecration of various *agiaris* "places for fire" (for example the Maneckji Sett *Agīāri*) as well as da□mas in the Mofussil. He was content to live in poverty and it is said that when Lowjee Wadia (1700-1774), the builder of the Bombay dockyard, was traveling between Surat and Bombay he saw Dasturji's hut-like home and left money for him to have a suitable house. On his return, he asked where the new house was, to which tradition relates the Dastur replied "Sir not in this world but in the spiritual" (Jamasp Ashana, pp. 25-38).

The Bombay lineage of the JamaspAsa family became established under Dastur Kurshedji Jamshedji, who, after studying Zand, Pahlavi, Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit, went to Bombay in 1801 where he was the first Shahenshai Dastur, although the Qadmis had a dastur there for the previous eighteen years (Jamasp Ashana, pp. 153-258). He was officially declared dastur

on 5 April 1812 and, when the Bombay Parsi Panchayat's membership was increased from twelve to eighteen in 1818, he became one of the priestly *akabars* (managers of the panchayat). Until the late 19th century, successive dasturs of this lineage were born and studied Avesta, Pahlavi, and Persian at Navsari before they were appointed to the dastur-ship in Bombay. The first to be born in Bombay was Dastur Kaikhusroo Jamaspji in 1866. In 1898 he performed the first *boi* ceremony (i.e., ceremony of feeding the sacred fire) of the new Anjuman Ātaš Bahrām.

Several members of the lineages have been the focus of controversy; for example, Dastur Jamshed Rustom was criticized in 1844-45, because he showed the missionary John Wilson various manuscripts and explained some rituals to him. Dastur Kaikhusroo Jamaspji, who was the first dastur of the new Bombay Ātaš Bahrām, performed the *naujote* (ceremony of investing a person, usually a child, with sacred shirt and cord) of Tata's French wife (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 39). The JamaspAsa lineage (nowadays in Bombay/Mumbai and Poona/Pune) holds what is referred to as the third "chair" among the dasturs of Navsari, the first being held by the Meherji Ranas and the second by Dastur Pahlan's lineage since 1726.

Although Parsis were generally politically secure and flourished in Navsari, the region was subject to diverse threats during the 17th and 18th centuries: famine in 1630-37 and 1718-19, the plague in 1684 and 1691, floods in 1731-32, and the invasion of the town in 1664 and 1667 by the Mahratta chief Šivāji. In the 1730s the Parsis feared the desecration of Irān-šāh by the invading armies of Pēšwā Bāji Rāo and so took the fire to the home of a Parsi leader in Surat. Parsis, as other communities, faced various external threats as well (S. K. Hodivala, 1927, p. 259; Kamekar and Dhunjisha, pp. 76-80).

When Irān-šāh was moved to Udwada in 1742, attempts were made to consecrate a new Ātaš Bahrām in Navsari. The story of the consecration of the second Ātaš Bahrām in India, this one for the Bhagarias (Irān-šāh being the responsibility of the Sanjanas), is related in Shapurji M. Sanjana's *Qessa-ye Zartoštiān-e Hendustān*. Although the *Qessa* is traditionally depicted as focused on the settlement in Sanjān, the central theme is the history of Irān-šāh Ātaš Bahrām down to the time of Changa Asa. The *Qessa-ye Zartoštiān-e Hendustān* is a parallel text dealing with the consecration of the second Ātaš Bahrām at Navsari. The priestly and lay folk of Navsari proposed the consecration of an Ātaš Bahrām, which reportedly was led by the Pious Khorshid. He obtained permission from Akbar and then circulated Parsis in other important settlements all of whom expressed joy and promised support. With a book from Persia to guide them, they duly consecrated the second Ātaš Bahrām in India in 1765 in the presence of a hundred priests "wise, pure of body and of powerful wisdom," driving the demons and sorcerers into "the darkest hell." All those who worshipped the Ātaš "became like a flowered garden." As people assembled to honor the Ātaš "everyone became free from sorrow because of its sight, the wishes were satisfied and the needs diminished" (Sanjana, tr., pp. 120-23). The celebration of the second Ātaš Bahrām's consecration became the subject of popular legend in Gujarati oral tradition, which produced a liturgical text of a song performed on auspicious occasions such as *naujotes*, weddings, and the *Ātaš nu git*, which awaits full scholarly analysis.

There were, naturally, other religious structures. Dakmas were constructed there by Changa Asa's son in 1531, by M. N. Sett in 1747 (Patel, pp. 3, 6), a large 195 *pāvi* (sacred [making it one of the largest in India]) dak-ma in 1796 (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 168), and a further

one in 1823 (Patel, p. 32). In 1864 an estimated crowd of 8,000 Parsis assembled from Bombay, Bulsar, and Surat to celebrate the consecration of a new da-ma (Patel, p. 163). Ātaš Bahrām, consecrated in 1765, was installed in a new building in 1810 (Patel, p. 26).

The scholarly tradition of Navsari continued in various ways. In 1856 a Zoroastrian school (*madrassa*) was opened to educate young priests and enable them to withstand the criticisms of Christian missionaries (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 716). A major Parsi library, the Dastur Meherji Rana Library, was opened in 1872, which became famous not only for its collection of books but also for its collection of manuscripts of religious texts (Patel and Paymaster, II. p. 407). Several schools were founded, which educated some of the major leaders of future Parsi society. The earliest one, Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, the first Indian to be knighted and then made baronet in recognition of his charitable works; was orphaned at an early age and went to Bombay from Navsari to earn his living in his future father-in-law's (F. N. Batliwala) business.

Batliwala had left Navsari in about 1790 to start a business in collecting and selling empty bottles before he went into the China trade in 1801, where he was again joined by Jeejeebhoy. In his later years, Jeejeebhoy visited Navsari and other Gujarat centers bestowing much largesse, including a *dar-e mehr*, walls around the *sagdi* (building for the fire in funeral grounds) and well for lustrations, a hall for the seasonal festivals (*gāhambār/gāhānbār*) and a school, as well as doles for the poor. He also paid the Gāēkwād 11,907 rupees to save his co-religionists in Navsari from paying the poll tax (*jezya*; Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 545). His visit casts an interesting side light on priestly authority of the time. Candidates for *nāvar* (priesthood initiatory ceremony) had to undergo initiation in Navsari. Now that there was an Ātaš Bahrām in Bombay, Jeejeebhoy conveyed a request that such initiations could henceforth take place in Bombay; but the permission was refused (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 912). Other Parsi notables with their roots in Navsari include Dadabhoy Naoroji and the Tata family.

There are a number of episodes pointing to the extent of Parsi prestige in the wider community. Although it was not normal for maharajas to visit and honor priests in their homes, in 1861 Maharaja Khanderas Gāēkwād called on Dastur Meherji Rana in his home and honored him with a shawl and turban (Patel and Paymaster, II. p. 8); and in 1874 the Maharaja of Baroda called on N. R. Tata in his Navsari home (Patel and Paymaster, II. p. 467). In 1878 the governor of Bombay, Sir Richard Temple, traveled to Navsari in order to see the Tata da□-ma and *sagdi*. He taken to see them by Dastur H. J. JamaspAsa, before they were consecrated, an event attended by approximately 10,000 Parsis (Patel and Paymaster, II. p. 584; Patel, pp. 231-36, 243-45). They also held prestigious public offices as well. For example, in 1886 Dinshah D. Mullan was appointed public prosecutor in Navsari. Dastur Edulji N. JamaspAsa, as well as officiating as dastur, was also customs officer in the Nizam of Hyderabad's state in the 1890s, and Burjorji R. Gharda was commissioner of Navsari municipality and was appointed by the Maharaja of Baroda to his State Commission in the same period. Sohrabji J. Taleyarkham (d. 1900) was made a judge in Navsari by the Gāēkwād (Patel and Paymaster, III. pp. 178, 625, 627).

Because of Navsari's religious importance, its Parsi community has been the focus of considerable charitable work by wealthy Parsis from elsewhere; including the founding of schools, hospitals, maternity homes, charitable dispensaries, science and arts colleges, orphanages, an animal dispensary, roads, as well as religious buildings and the famed Dastur Meherji Rana library. In the 1881 census the Parsi population of Navsari was recorded at

8,118: 4,447 females and 3,671 males. The educational levels were not as high as those in Bombay. In that year, there were 1,934 educated males and only 605 educated females (Patel and Paymaster, III. p. 30). Navsari, however, also remained a center of priestly conflict with the Bhagaria, Sanjana, and Meherhomji lineages, contesting each other's rights to perform ceremonies. The disputes lasted into the 20th century.

*Surat.* The port had been important in coastal trade for centuries. It had also developed as an important international port, partly as a stage for the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, and also for trade in the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, and even China. Parsis took part in the growth of this trade (Karaka, I, pp. 1-46; Bulley, *passim*; Kameronkar, 1998, *passim*; Kameronkar and Soonu Dhunjisha, pp. 69-74). From the 17th century Surat became a major center for the Parsis, overtaking Broach as their main commercial base in the Presidency. The earliest reference in the *Prakash* to Surat is a call for two *mobads* to come from Ankleshwar (the base of the Godavra Panthak) in 1616, four more were sent for in 1659 (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 11). In 1647, Nanabhoy Punjya built a da□-ma, but there is reference to an earlier undated one (Patel, p. 6). The cause of the increased importance of Surat was the arrival of European traders in the city. A number of Navsari Parsis moved to Surat following the Maratha raid on Navsari in 1707, for Surat, which had been fortified in 1664 following the raid of Šivāji, gave them greater security (see above).

The leading 17th century Surat Parsi trader was Rustom Maneck Seth (1635-1721), who has been the subject of a number of studies, among which the ones carried out by Jivanji Modi (1929), Shapurji Kavasji Hodivala (1931, chaps. 1-4), and David L. White, apparently the most scholarly one, stand out. There is also the succinct account of Maneck Stiles (pp. 170-204). The key source materials are "The Qisseh of Rustom" discussed by Modi and the Surat Factory Records (for the Portuguese records see Panduronga Pissurlencar). Rustom's father had served as a broker to the Portuguese, a position Rustom inherited. He also served the Dutch and finally the British. The history of the East India Company at this time was complex. The Old East India Company, sometimes referred to as the London East India Company, had a monopolistic control of trade between India and Britain and employed the (Hindu) Parekh brothers as brokers, but "interlopers" who had engaged in private trade started the New (or English) East India Company, which employed Rustom Maneck as broker. The result inevitably was confrontation. The situation was made more complicated when parliament dispatched Sir William Norris to the Mughal Court in 1702-03 to negotiate trading privileges for the New East India Company and Rustom was deputed to accompany and assist him. Norris displayed little respect for Awrangzēb, dismissed his conditions for trade, and departed with undiplomatic haste, leaving Rustom to incur a substantial fine, which the company was reluctant to reimburse. Rustom, however, remained in the monarch's favor and received large gifts of land around Surat, which he gave to his family members, thus creating the three major areas of Surat: Frampura (after Rustom's elder son, Framji), Nanpura (after his grandson Nanabhoy), and Rustompura after Rustom himself. The last of these consisted of a large garden up the Tapti River, a purchase that later became significant. Rustom amassed a fortune despite being caught up in company and broker feuding. He displayed considerable charity on numerous occasions in building bridges, digging wells, etc. In 1707, he settled in his garden a group of refugee Parsi weavers from Navsari, who were fleeing Maratha incursions. These weavers, and later Parsi groups seeking security in fortified Surat, enabled Rustom to control the means of production, further alienating his rivals and eventually provoking the jealousy of the company,

which dismissed him. But he was reinstated and continued in the economically powerful position of East India Company broker until his death in 1721 (Bruce, III, pp. 249-636).

His three sons inherited their father's position but quickly fell foul of intrigues by their rivals, leading to their imprisonment. One of them, Naoroji, managed to escape and obtained passage aboard ship back to England, where he spent a year persuading the directors of the East India Company of the injustices done to his family (see Commissariat). He obtained full restitution and returned to India a wealthy and powerful figure. He settled in Bombay, where he became prominent in the Bombay Parsi Panchayet and a major charitable donor, although the family retained offices and influence in Surat and were major charitable donors in Surat, Bombay, and Navsari.

The successful appeal of Naoroji Maneck in London has resulted in that family being the focus of attention for writers on Surat Parsis. There were other important families as well, notably the Davar Modi family, who were regarded as the heads of Surat Parsis for centuries. Their ancestor dated from the 17th century. He and his descendents supplied provisions to the British in their early settlement and were therefore known as *modis* (approximately meaning "house stewards"). They were also recognized as community judges or magistrates (*dāvvars*). Their authority was recognized both by the Nawab of Surat and the British, and some of their descendents continue to live in Surat (Katrak, *passim*). The family also claimed to speak on behalf of all Mofussil Parsis on major issues. For example, in the 1860s, Modee Rustomjee Khoorsedjee protested against the change in Parsi family law being planned by Bombay Parsis and questioned their right to speak on behalf of all Parsis (Palsetia, pp. 211-20). In part it would appear that the Mofussil Parsis feared the reforming possibilities of the highly educated urban Parsi leadership.

The conflicts between Bhagaria and Sanjana priestly lineages, which started in Navsari, had also an impact on Surat, but Surat was the base of a yet greater controversy in connection with the religious calendar. In 1720, an Iranian Zoroastrian, Mobad Jamasp Velāyati (Jāmāsp Welāyati), arrived in Surat and realized that the Parsi calendar was one month in advance of the one followed in Persia. Being aware of religious disputes in Surat in connection with funeral practices, he hesitated to make the discrepancy public. Instead, he taught Zand/Pahlavi to three bright priests, namely Dastur Dārāb (Kumana Dadaru) of Surat, Dastur JamaspAsa of Navsari, and Dastur Kamdin of Broach. Velāyati visited Bombay before returning to Persia in 1721; his prior stay in Surat is perhaps an indication of the importance of the city at the time, which Jivanji Modi has shown to have been a center of priestly learning in the 17th century (Modi, 1916, pp. 79-87). Following Velāyati's advice a layman, Maneckji Edulji A. Dalal, began praying according to the *qadmi* (the ancient) calendar, which caused further disputes. Fifteen years later, in 1736, a *behdin*, Jamshid, came from Persia to Surat and began to explain to Parsis there the differences between the Iranian and the Parsi calendars. Dastur Murzban Kaus Fredun Munajjam of Surat (1717-79) discoursed at length with Jamshid regarding the calendar and concluded that Jamshid Irani was correct and so advised Surat Parsis, thus giving birth to the Qadmi group.

Their first Dasturs were Dastur Darab and his cousin Dastur Kaus Darab, who had studied Avestan and Pahlavi with Jamasp (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 49). Four years later the latter moved to Bombay, where he spoke extensively about the calendar issue. The ensuing disputes over two decades caused such problems that complaints were made in the durbar "court" at

Broach, resulting in the arrest of Dastur Kamdin and others. The Nawab of Broach referred the matter to the Parsi panchayats of Navsari and Surat, and Bombay Parsis were told to follow the judgments of these two panchayats (illustrating the continued authority of the older settlements). Their judgment was communicated to the community in Broach affirming that the old ways should be continued and so most Parsis follow the traditional Shenshais (< Pers. *šāhanšāhi*, "royal") calendar (on the calendar controversy, see Stausberg, 2002, I, pp. 434-40; Vitalone, pp. 11f.).

The importance of Surat's Parsi community was highlighted by the fact that when Abraham Anquetil du Perron stayed in India to study Zoroastrianism and the Parsis, he stayed not in Bombay but in Surat (1757-60; Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 41; Modi, 1916, pp. 1-141). In 1754 Anquetil's interest in the Parsis had been aroused by the sight of some facsimile leaves of the Avesta and by Thomas Hyde's (q.v.) book *Historia Religionis*, which was based mainly on Persian, Greek, and Latin texts. Avestan was not then understood in Europe. He traveled to India in 1750 and journeyed around the country. His aim was to gain a first hand understanding of Zoroastrianism, knowing that the Parsis possessed much more literature about the religion than could be found in Europe.

He also appreciated the importance of studying the cognate language, Sanskrit. In 1757 he settled in Surat, and published his findings in 1771. Anquetil's account of early Parsi history is based on the *Qessa-ye Sanjān*, but he witnessed at first hand the arguments between Sanjana and Bhagaria priests and the calendar dispute. He was taught by Dastur Darab, a pupil of Dastur Jamasp Velayati. He spent most of his time collating various Avestan and Pahlavi manuscripts. Anquetil relates that he persuaded Dastur Darab into allowing him entry into the fire temple, disguised as a Parsi, a claim whose accuracy Modi has questioned. At the very least Modi established that Anquetil dramatized events to the point of distortion to emphasize his own bravery to his countrymen (Schwab, pp. 109-41; Modi, 1916, *passim*).

Surat had also been the home of Kaus Jalal. A leading businessman in Surat, Dhunjishah Manjishah, became leader of the Qadmis, and in 1768 sent Kaus Jalal with seventy-eight questions concerning the calendar and other issues to the dasturs of Persia. This stimulated the last of the *Rivayats*, the *Ithoter* (=78, see Vitalone). His motive was to learn about the consecration of fire temples, specifically *Ātaš Bahrāms*, because a Qadmi *Ātaš Bahrām* was planned for Bombay. Kaus Jalal took with him his ten-year old son, Peshotan. They left Surat by ship in 1768 and traveled via Muscat to Bandar 'Abbās, thence to Yazd, a journey of three and a half months. Kaus left his son in the charge of a priest in Yazd to learn Avestan, and after four years of training he was ordained *nāvar* (initiated into priesthood).

They stayed in Yazd for three years before proceeding to Isfahan, where Peshotan studied Arabic and Persian in a *madrasa*. After periods in Shiraz (where Kaus Jalal successfully interceded at court for Zoroastrians of Kermān to be released from the *jezya*) they journeyed to Baghdad, where Peshotan studied Turkish. Tradition relates that the caliph was so impressed with their erudition that he gave the honorific title *Mollā* to father and son, an honor normally reserved for scholarly Muslims. Thereafter Peshotan was known as "Mulla Feroze." This is, however, an anachronistic legend, since the Abbasid caliphate at Baghdad had come to an end in 1258.

In 1780, after twelve years of studying in Persia, father and son returned to Surat. They later moved to Bombay, where their teachings on the calendar caused considerable disputes, but under Kaus Jalal's influence the wealthy businessman funded the consecration of the first *Ātaš Bahrām* in Bombay, the Qadmi Dadiseth *Ātaš Bahrām*. Kaus Jalal was hailed as its first dastur in 1783. In 1794 he resigned and moved to Hyderabad, where he became a respected member of court, handing the dastur-ship to Mulla Feroze (Paymaster, 1931a, passim).

The story of Mulla Feroze and the Qabissa controversy highlight the importance of Surat in 18th-century Parsi history. It was also the first place to have more than one *Ātaš Bahrām*. Plans for each had long been maturing. In 1819 the widow of D. N. Modi sought the Anjuman's permission to establish an *Ātaš Bahrām*. At the same time P. K. Vakil planned a Qadmi *Ātaš*. As there was no precedent for two such temples in one place there was much debate. The Shenshais, being the majority, argued that they had priority. The Supreme Court of Surat said the widow should have her building consecrated first and thereafter Vakil could consecrate his. Some 20,000 people gathered to celebrate the installation of the fire in the Modi *Ātaš Bahrām* on 19 November 1823. The Surat government closed the courts, the Collector's office, treasury, and all factories in honor of the occasion.

It was estimated that the *ašo-dād* (remuneration to a priest) expenses amounted to approximately 8,000 rupees, for there was a huge communal feast. Similarly, when the Vakil *Ātaš* was consecrated on the fifth of December of the same year, priests and *behdins* from numerous Gujarat villages, as well as from Bombay, congregated and again shared a large communal feast (Patel, pp. 34-38). The agreement that more than one *Ātaš Bahrām* could exist in one place provided the precedent for Bombay, where the first was the Qadmi Dadyseth *Ātaš*, then the Qadmi Banaji *Ātaš* (1845), and finally the Sanjana Wadia *Ātaš* and the Shahinshahi Anjuman *Ātaš*, founded in 1830 and 1897, respectively.

Surat was also the birthplace of a new Parsi religious movement, *Ilm-i Khshnoom*. The founder, Behramshah Nowroji Shroff (1858-1927), was born there and after his visit to Persia and his mystical experiences there and a tour around India returned to Surat (1891-1909), where he remained silent for some time before beginning his teaching, and then moving to Bombay.

Several Surat leaders were major benefactors. For example, Bikhaji Eduljee (d. 1780), resident of Surat, funded a building for *Irān-šāh* at Udwada; N. Kohaji (d. 1797), an agent for British ships coming to Surat, built a structure for the sacred fire in Yazd and sent the sacred fire from Surat to Yazd by road and purchased two properties to cover its upkeep. He also funded the consecration of the Goti Adaran just outside the walls of Surat, a much-loved temple where it is believed that miracles had occurred (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 83). R. M. Enty, a prominent Surat Shetia and a leading figure in the cotton industry, built a *da□-ma* and *dharmsala* (building devoted to charitable or religious purposes) in Surat (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 99).

As with Navsari, the Surat community and the Parsis in surrounding villages, were the focus of considerable charity both from its own members and from descendants who had moved to Bombay. The three main forms of charity were the building of temples, *da□mas* and *dharmsalas*, but there were many others also: schools, sanatoria, technical institutes, orphanages (which also catered for children who were not necessarily orphans from remote



villages so they could attend school in Surat), hospitals, old people's homes, charitable dispensaries, libraries, medical care, and classes for Avestan and Pahlavi. Not all donations were exclusively for Parsis. For example, in 1864 F. S. Parakh donated 25,000 rupees for a dharmshala for travelers of all communities, and C. F. Parakh in the same year gave 15,000 rupees for the renovation of the Hindu-run Panjrapole (place for stray cattle); in 1868 the D. N. Mistry school was opened in Gopipura for children of all castes and creeds (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 111, 135, 259).

As in Navsari, leading Parsis in Surat were held in high esteem by the authorities. For example, in 1822, Ferozeshah and Ardashir Dhunjishah were honored by the nawab in a durbar at Surat, returning to their homes in triumphal procession, with the nawab's retinue of elephants, Ardashir on horseback, two hundred guards from the nawab's court, mace bearers and finally Ferozeshah, a triumphant procession subsequently repeated for them by the British in 1829. Ardashir Dhunjishah was honored for his work as Kotwal (superintendent of police and magistrate) and for rescuing many from floods and fire. Indeed Bhagwan Swami Narayan, when visiting Surat, called on Ardashir and gave him his turban and portrait as a mark of respect. Ardashir kept them in a place apart in his home, and once each year displayed them for public darshan when Swami Narayan priests visited to do puja (Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 164, 112, 221; Kamerkar and Dhunjisha, p. 90). In 1863 R. C. P. Ghadiali of Surat ran the mint for the issue of new coins for the Maharaja of Baroda, and in that year two Parsis were made municipal commissioners (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 54). In 1869 Kaikhusroo H. Alpawalla was made government pleader in the Surat court, and in 1875 he was made judge of the Surat Small Causes Court (Patel and Paymaster, III, p. 805).

Surat, like Navsari, suffered persecution from the Delhi sultanate in the 13th and 14th centuries but was more secure under the Gujarat sultanate after 1407. Both were invaded by Śivāji in 1664 and 1667, when the homes of Parsis and non-Parsis alike were looted. Surat also sustained a plague epidemic in the 17th century besides four major fires in the 18th century and six more in the first half of the 19th century. There was a major fire in 1836, two in 1837 followed by four days of flooding, and another one in 1889 (Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 289, 303, 305, III, p. 291). These instigated substantial charitable donations while also prompting a number of Parsis to migrate. Most headed south to Bombay, and some traveled north to Karachi. The economy of Surat was weakened by the silting up of the river, which made access for ships more difficult and the conflicts between the various powers in the city resulted in much business transferring to the growing metropolis of Bombay in the 19th century. The 1881 Census recorded 12,593 Parsis in Surat, 5,779 males and 6,814 females, by far the largest number outside Bombay, which by that time had begun to assume pre-eminence among Parsis in India.

*Broach.* There are various indications that Broach/Bharuch was a more important early center for Parsis than we can currently document. It was an ancient port mentioned in the Periplus Maris Erythraei (ca. CE 80) and by Ptolemy as Barygaza, and perhaps dating back to Harappan times. It is plausible that the Parsi community there was an early trading Diaspora group from Persia as Stausberg (2002, I, p. 382) has suggested. There are suggestions that there was a Parsi temple in Broach in the 10th century. The first individual Parsi known to have settled there arrived in 1142. In 1309 one Pestonji built a dak-ma, because the "old one" had become dilapidated (Patel, p. 2, in Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 81; the earlier one is dated 1239; see

also Kamerkar and Dhunjishah, p. 71). An agiari is said to have been consecrated there in the 11th or 12th centuries (Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 175).

Broach is said to have been a center for copying Zoroastrian manuscripts from the 16th century. It was from Broach that the first Parsi (Nariman Hōšang) went to Persia, which resulted in the first of the *Rivayats*, and its leaders were among those directly addressed in that *Rivayat* (Dhabhar, p. 600). The leader of Broach, Hōšang son of Ram, is identified as "that holy and dear" person in Nariman Hōšang's *Rivayat* (Dhabhar p. 606). The township mentioned most frequently in the *Rivayets* was Navsari, but Broach was also important. Broach Parsis were involved in nine of the *Rivayats*, but what we know of them is mainly due to the travel accounts of W. Geleynssen de Jongh, who was in Broach in 1625.

It is difficult to plot a history of the community on the scant information that has reached us. We know that a da□-ma was built there in 1654 (Patel, p. 3), a *dar-e mehr* in 1727 and another in 1760 (Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 27-41; Patel, pp. 7, 14), and an Anjuman da□-ma was consecrated in 1833 with 5,000-6,000 Parsis having gathered to celebrate (Patel, pp. 3, 71). There were violent incidents involving Parsis and Muslims in Broach. In 1702, a Parsi called a Muslim a *fakir* (mendicant), and the nawab gave the Parsi the choice either to convert to Islam or be executed; he chose death and his memory continues to be honored in prayers in Broach (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 22).

In 1857 there were Parsi-Muslim riots in Broach. It was alleged that a Parsi (B. S. Bharucha) had entered a mosque; in retaliation two Parsi agiaries were desecrated, and some Parsis were killed, including the *panthaki* (a senior *mobed* who allocates priestly duties in his panthak), and the fire was extinguished. Bharucha himself was violently assaulted and then dragged through the streets. Five others were also killed (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 728; other Muslim-Parsi riots occurred in the area in 1851 and 1874, see Palsetia, pp. 187-89). By way of contrast, the only indication of Parsi-Hindu relations is one Kamdin R. Bhagat (d. 1815), known as Bhagat (pious), because of his singing of Hindu Bhajans. A Hindu officer visited him weekly to venerate a pipal tree in his grounds (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 130).

References are made to various charitable donations to Parsi enterprises in Broach in addition to da□mas and *dar-e mehrs* and two gardens (*baugs*) built there. Fardunji Kohiyar established a reading room and a scientific society there in 1831 (Karaka, II, p. 40). C. N. Cama funded a Zoroastrian girls' school in Broach in 1865 and another one was established by J. N. Petit in 1884. There is also a reference to Jeejeebhoy Dadabhoy Zoroastrian School (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 146, III, pp. 245, 686). The main Parsi business was in the cotton industry, which until 1800 was the main item of export to China, and, after 1813, there was a 600 percent increase in export to Britain (1800-50; see Guha, 1982, pp. 20-21). In the early 1880s, Rastamji Manakji of Broach invested in a large tract of land to grow cotton, which developed into a flourishing business (Karaka, I, pp. 100-1); in 1892 D. F. Ginwalla and four other Parsis were appointed to a committee of the newly established Cotton Ginning Association, and Darashah R. Dalal, a Parsi of Broach, was director of two mills (d. 1895). B. S. Ginwalla, a resident of Broach, opened a ginning factory and also served as a Commissioner of Broach Municipality (d. in 1900). Another Broach leader, Hormusji N. Jambusarwalla (d. 1901), owned two ginning factories at nearby Jambusar (Patel and Paymaster, III, pp. 535, 801, IV, p. 47). Dosabhai Framji Karaka (II, p. 259) considered the Parsis of Broach to be second only to those of Bombay in terms of wealth.

A number of Parsis held senior posts in wider Broach society. Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy (not the later Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy) was broker for the British in 1680 (Guha, 1982, p. 8). Dastur P. A. Kamdin was first-class *monef* (sub-civil judge) in the years 1837-54. He was succeeded in this post in 1877 by his brother, Dinshah P. Kamdin, and in 1864 C. C. Sabavala was made deputy collector and magistrate (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 9, 104), as was Khan Bahadur Bomanji E. Modi in 1883. Mancharshah D. Vakil, a leading advocate in Broach, was widely respected in the legal profession, a trustee of Broach Parsi Punchayet, and a delegate of the Surat Matrimonial Court (d. 1896). Edulji M. Contractor was a large landowner and a member of the municipal board and of the district local board (d. 1901; Patel and Paymaster, III, 570, IV, p. 42). Clearly the Parsi community in Broach was more important than details in available sources indicate. The 1881 Census recorded the total of 3,042 Parsis in Broach, 1,444 males and 1,598 females.

*Other Parsi Centers in Gujarat and Beyond.* One of the oldest structures outside the centers already covered was a dak-ma at Ankleswar that was consecrated in 1517. A dak-ma was built in Cambay in 1534, where a *dar-e mehr* was also consecrated around this time (Patel, p. 2). A dak-ma was built in Damaun in 1697 to replace another one that was said to be a hundred years old (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 848; Patel, p. 120). Bulsar was probably a more important settlement than is now apparent. The Parsis there acquired their first priest in 1631, and a dak-ma was built in 1645 (Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 13, 843). In 1731, the Parsis exerted sufficient influence on the Gāēkwād to exempt them from the religious poll tax (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 28); a year later, the holy Irān-šāh fire was kept there for two years on its way to Udwada and a second dak-ma was opened in 1777 (Patel, p.14). Parsis settled in Thana to the south in 1774, where a dak-ma was opened in 1781 (and another in 1841), and C. R. Patel funded there a *dar-e mehr*, a dak-ma, and a *nasā-k-āna* (lit. house for corpses, where funeral ceremonies took place; see Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 51, 59, 87).

Religious buildings were erected in many Gujarat towns and villages in the mid 19th century thanks to the wealth earned by Parsis throughout the Bombay Presidency. The opening of a dak-ma indicates a sizable population, because the complexity of the structural design and the associated consecration costs require a number of community members resident in the area to justify the time and expenses. Burial grounds cost less but were rarely opened in the Bombay Presidency, only in more distant and smaller settlements. In the period 1770-1895, 120 dakmas were consecrated, almost all in Gujarat. Twenty-four burial grounds were purchased, with all but one outside the Presidency (e.g., Tellicherry on the Malabar Coast in 1793; Cochin in 1823; Macao in 1829; Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Peshwar, Rawalpindi and Sukkur all in 1842; Colombo 1846). The few dakmas opened in distant climes were Calcutta (1822) and Aden (1847), two centers with wealthy leaders. A study of the pattern of funeral grounds gives both an indication of periods of financial prosperity for the Parsis and when and to where they migrated for business. Temple building similarly gives an indication of wealth and migration. In the period 1770-1895, 150 temples were built (and a further 19 in the following fifteen years).

The first to be built outside the Bombay Presidency were in Deccan Hyderabad and Calcutta in 1839, but no more were built until one in Rajkot in 1875. As many early temples had to be rebuilt, sometimes with new splendid buildings, the extent of charitable donations is even greater than it first appears (Giara, pp. 1-7). In broad terms the pattern tended to be that communities first made provision for funerals and then built temples and subsequently dharmshalas. In the 1850s, the region was opened up for travel with the introduction of the

railways, and so numerous dharmshalas were built. The Great Indian Peninsula railway was opened in 1850 and the Bombay-Thana railway was opened in 1853. Such developments boosted the trade of Bombay and of the hinterland, thereby stimulating much travel. In 1866, for example, with the opening of the Bombay-Baroda railway, new dharmshalas were built at Grant Road in Bombay (given by Rustom Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy), Bandra (Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy), Dahisar (C. F. Pareck), Pardi (Rustom Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy), Udwada (Dowager Lady Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy), Bulsar (B. M. Wadia), Surat (C. F. Parekh), Sion (C. F. Parekh) and Broach (Rustom Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy; Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 202; for details on charitable building works, see Hinnells, 1985, pp. 290-326; on temples, see Giara, 2002).

The Parsis enjoyed a high public profile throughout the region. Those who became members of the British Parliament made extensive tours of Gujarat on their visits to India: Dadabhoy Naoroji (1886, 1893, and 1906) and Muncherji Bhownaggee in 1896-97. A number held high office in various towns. Dadabhoy Naoroji, for example, before his work in England, was dewan (prime minister) of Baroda in 1874, and Muncherji Bhownaggee had, at the Maharajah's request, drawn up a new constitution for Bhavnagar in 1887. Saklatvala toured India in 1927 while he was a member of parliament. As Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy (first baronet) had toured Gujarat distributing largesse, so too did others.

In 1862, for example, Rustom Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy toured Gujarat starting at the Portuguese settlement of Damaun, where his arrival was greeted with a salvo of thirteen guns; the mayor and people of the town turned out to greet him, and he received similar welcomes at Udwada, Bulsar, Navsari, Baroda and Surat (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 50). Various Parsis distributed charitable aid to many centers throughout Gujarat, but their charity was not restricted to Parsis or to areas where they might attract the notice of the British. Their generosity also extended to remote areas far from their own settlements when the need was noticed. Rustom Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy was honored by the king of Portugal for funding an English language school at Damaun with a Portuguese name. He also opened English schools in Navsari, Bulsar, and Billimoria in 1864. Gujarati Parsis gave 164,493 rupees to the Bengal Famine Relief fund in 1866; Readymoney gave 50,000 rupees to a mental asylum in Sind in 1871, and D. M. Petit built a leper hospital at Ratnagiri in 1875. In 1894 the family of J. N. Petit funded a new ward for Matunga Lunatic Asylum. Khan Bahadur Naoroji P. Vakil funded an ophthalmic hospital and dispensary at Ahmedabad, which was run by the government but named after him (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 125, 127, 204, 370, 522, III, pp. 480, 783).

Parsis held important official posts in scattered areas and some of them held senior positions. The brothers Vicaji and Pestonji Meherji oversaw the land and sea revenue collection of the North Konkan in the early 19th century. They cleared jungles and built roads and bridges for the transport of cotton (500 bullock carts of cotton annually) to Bombay and established a mint at Aurangabad, but they finally went bankrupt because the Nizam government failed to repay loans provided by the brothers (Guha, 1982, pp. 27-29). Pestonji B Kotwal was first appointed overseer of Surat Municipality, then assistant secretary in Ahmadabad Municipality, then chief police inspector there; he was then made paymaster in Bulsar and finally became police superintendent in Nizam State (Patel and Paymaster, III p. 596).

## Parsis on the "Fringes" of the Bombay Presidency :

*Poona*. Although there are some hints of earlier Parsis in Poona, the main period of their arrival was post 1818, when the British took control of the city from the Marathi Peshwas following the battles of Kirkee and Yeraoda in 1817 and Koregaon in January 1818. Previously, the Parsis had been suppliers to the British forces in Sirar and moved with them to Poona. One known individual was J. M. Chinoy who had opened a shop at Shirur camp and in Poona in 1814 (d. aged 100 in 1891, see Patel and Paymaster, III, pp. 365-66), and thus he was an eyewitness to the wars between the Peshwas and the British. At Poona, Parsis started as shopkeepers supplying the Europeans (a then common synonym for British), but one of them, Khursetji Jamsetjee Mody (1755-1815), achieved high office in this early period. Mody joined the service of the British Residency at Poona in 1800, rising to the position of native agent to Colonel Sir Barry Close, Resident at Poona, a position he held for ten years. He came to the attention of the Maratha Peshwa Bajirao II, who made him revenue commissioner of the Carnatac. Mody faced plots from some Marathas who accused him of corruption before the Peshwa. These charges were unsubstantiated, but when Elphinstone was told that Mody was plotting with the Marathas against the British, Elphinstone demanded that he choose between the two positions, and he chose to continue with the British. Fearing for his life, Mody planned to leave Poona, but was poisoned the day before his planned departure (Darukhanawala, I, pp. 137-38; Karaka, II, pp. 40-41).

The first known Parsi edifices in Poona were two *da□mas*, one built in 1825 and a larger one built in 1835 (Patel, pp. 40, 76). From approximately 1835, it became known as the "monsoon capital" of the Presidency, because government and the wealthy spent the monsoon period in the hills, away from the heat and humidity of Bombay. In 1838 Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy funded a *dharmsala* near Poona for travelers of all communities (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 330). In 1840 he had a *jaśan* (celebration with liturgical services) performed in Poona and announced plans to build a *dar-e mehr* there, though his correspondence suggests he only made his first visit in 1841 (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 380). In 1843 the Patel *dar-e mehr* was opened, followed a year later by that of Jamasetji Jeejeebhoys (Patel, p. 97; Giara, pp. 128, 126). The Patel Agiari appointed as its first dastur a son of a Navsari dastur, Dastur Jamaspji Edulji (on the Poona branch of the JamaspAsa lineage, see Jamasp Ashana, pp. 41-152). As with the Bombay branch of the lineage, several of them were born and studied in Navsari, although they went on to later to Poona. Dastur Jamaspji Dastur was the high priest of the Deccan and active in the period 1824-46. He was one of the dasturs to whom various *anjumans* (association, assembly) turned for guidance on the consecration of agiaris and *dakmas*.

After Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy's 1841 visit to Poona, he started planning a scheme for extensive water works (drought rather than monsoon floods were the problem for Poona; there were droughts in the following years, severe droughts indicated by an asterisk, 1823, 1824\*, 1825\*, 1832-38, 1844-46\* 1862-67, 1876-77\*, 1896-97\*, 1899-1902\*). The scheme took ten years to complete because of conflicting advice from different European engineers and the lack of governmental support. Letters in the Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy files in Bombay University Library indicate his growing exasperation (vol. 366, letter dated 11 November 1850, Cursetji Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy to Captain Studdert at Poona), but by 1850 Jamsetjee Jigibhoy speaks of his "annual visit to Poona" and in 1851 his heir, Cursetji Jamsetjee Jigibhoy, refers to his father traveling to Poona more often (Letters, vol. 353, letter dated 17 December 1850, and vol. 366, letter dated 24 May 1850).

An important early figure among Poona Parsis was Jamshedji Dorabji (Naigumwala), who was contractor for building the railway to Poona, including the stretch over the Ghats, which was opened in 1855. *The Gazetteer of Bombay City and Island* (I, pp. 344-45) points out the enormous difficulties involved in laying this line, but does not even mention its Parsi contractor (Karaka, II, pp. 253-57; Darukhanawala, I, pp. 198-99)

Another important early Parsi figure in Poona was Pestonjee Sorabji who started as a shopkeeper but then obtained the lucrative contract for carrying mail, eventually from Poona to Bombay, Aurangabad, and Nagpur. He is said to have kept 500 horses for the mail system. He maintained the mail during the Sepoy Revolt (the first war of Indian Independence) in 1857 and was made Khan Bahadur by the British for his efforts. His two sons, Sardar Dorabjee and Sardar Nowrojee, started the Poona-Deccan Paper Mills Co. Ltd. and built a cotton factory in 1885. Sirdar Dorabjee also started a bank and an ice factory in Poona. He was active in civic affairs and in 1884 was the first elected president of the Poona Municipality, a post he held for several years, and in 1895 obtained a seat in the Bombay Legislative Assembly. The brothers worked together in their business, and when the older brother died, Dorabjee was elected president of Poona Municipality and was also given a place on the Bombay Legislative Council (Darukhanawala, II, pp. 140-51; Diddee and Gupta, pp. 155-58).

The earliest Parsi settlers in Poona were traders, but increasingly more became professionals, lawyers and doctors especially. In part this was because of the educational facilities of Poona that dated back to the early times of Hindu priestly centers there. In the second half of the 19th century, Parsi benefactors donated much to educational institutions. One of the early benefactors was Rustom Jamsetjee Jigibhoy who, for example, in 1863 gave 1,500 rupees to a convent school in Poona, and a further 1,000 rupees for student residences at Poona College; in 1864 Sir Rustam Jamsetjee Jigibhoy gave 100,000 rupees to the Deccan College in Poona; in 1865 C. J. Readymoney funded the building of an engineering college and in 1869 gave money for a science college; in 1878, Behramji Jeejeebhoy founded a medical school in the city; and in 1889 Sir Dinshah M. Petit gave a large plot of land for a bacteriological laboratory as part of the Science College (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 73, 128, 162, 654, III p. 315, 757). The Sardar Dastur Noshirvan School for Zoroastrian girls, mainly attracting students from middle class families, started in 1893; Zoroastrianism was included in the syllabus and daily prayers were said (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 412).

Until 1947, when it had to become inter-communal, it had the reputation of being one of the best schools in the Presidency. It also had boarding facilities for students coming from afar. A school for boys was not opened until 1912, because it had been thought that there were better provisions for boys' education in the 19th century (Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 1; see also Oturkar, p. 94). This focus on educational charity continued into the 20th century, when Sir D. J. Tata (1859-1932) and Sir R. J. Tata gave 15,000 rupees for the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute in Poona and a further 25,000 rupees to the Institute for a Persian and Arabic Department (Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 67, VI, p. 4; Oturkar, pp. 98-99). In 1930 Sir Dorabji Tata Trusts gave 15,000 rupees per annum for five years to establish a Tata section in agricultural economics at the Gokhale Institute for Politics, and two years later Sir Cusrow and Sir Ness Wadia founded the Naoroji Wadia College, which is now a constituent college of Poona University (Patel and Paymaster, VIII, p. 90; Oturkar, p. 88). In 1943, Sir Dorabji Tata Trusts provided funds for a college of commerce, and a year later gave 8,309,000 rupees for a national chemical laboratory (Oturkar, pp. 102-4). Several Parsis were prominent academics,

for example, C. D. Naigumwala, who was made professor of Experimental Physics in 1882 at Poona Science College, and in 1900 became director of the Poona observatory (d. 1938; Patel and Paymaster, VIII, p. 450).

From the mid 19th century, Poona became not just the "Monsoon capital," but also the center of social life for Bombay's wealthy families. Some of the most splendid residences were owned by such Parsi families as the Adenwallas, Jeejeebhoy (esp. Rustomji Jeejeebhoy), and the Petit family, where they came for "the season," away from the monsoon (Diddee and Gupta:, pp. 153-54, 192-93). Functions held in their mansions attracted many high-ranking British officials and other prominent personalities, including the governor of Bombay, Aga Khan, the Nawab of Surat, the Persian consul, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Maharaja of Indore, and the Gāēkwād of Baroda (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 623, II, pp. 73, 322, 459, 476, III, p. 300). Parsis had shared a gymnasium (*gymkhana*) with the "Europeans," but after disagreements over the use of certain facilities, the Parsi landlord asked the Europeans to leave, and the tennis courts and other sporting facilities were thereafter exclusively used by the Parsis, who also took over the neighboring Fountain Hotel from the Europeans (Franks, pp. 114-15).

Parsi charity in Poona was not confined to education, but, compared with Bombay, it was distributed more inter-communally, partly because of social mixing; and partly because the community itself was mostly affluent with few of its own members in need of charitable aid. In addition to the education benefactions noted above, several Parsis also supported the Albert Education Library Institute in the Cantonment (Moledina, p. 72). Dinbai, widow of N. M. Petit funded two leper wards in the David Sassoon Asylum (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 124, III, p. 442). In 1896, J. H. Mody donated ten cottages for use as a sanatorium at Lonavla, near Poona, and Pestonji Limjibhoy served for 25 years as secretary of the Poona Panjrapole (Patel and Paymaster, III, pp. 581, 701).

Although the dastur-ship in Poona had not had the seniority of that in Navsari, it was nevertheless an important post. Dastur N. J. JamaspAsa was twice honored by the government. In 1867 he was made Khan Bahadur for his work in the "Indian Mutiny" and two years later was awarded a gold medal for his social contributions (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 238, 263). In 1867 he had three wells dug in Poona for use by Hindus, Muslims, and Parsis, a major benefit in drought afflicted Poona (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 222). He was recognized as the senior priest of all Parsi communities in the Deccan; and was succeeded by Sirdar Khan Bahadur Shams-ul Ulema Dr Hoshang Jamasp. After working in the police department and serving as Dastur at Mhow, he became professor of Oriental languages in the Deccan College, Poona, in 1874, and High Priest of the Deccan in 1884. In 1886, he was given honorary M.A. and Ph.D. degrees by the University of Vienna (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 32, 133, III, p. 13, IV, pp. 162, 166). For eight years of service in the Municipal Corporation he was made Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 529, 630, III, p. 200, IV pp. 1, 19). When he died in 1908, his *uthumnā* ceremony (the ceremony of the departure of the soul held on the third day after death) was attended by Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, the Vada Dastur of Navsari, and the deputy (*naib*) dastur of the Wadia Ātaš Bahrām in Bombay, a reflection of the esteem in which he was held (Patel and Paymaster, IV, p. 18). When later that year Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy died, it was the new Poona Dastur, Kaikobad Aderbad, who proposed the main motion to recognize the new Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy (5 Baronet) as leader of the Parsi community, a role given only to someone highly respected in the community (Patel and Paymaster, IV, pp. 27-28).

Another member of the priestly JamaspAsa family, Ervad Meher Hoshang Dastur JamaspAsana, was made Khan Bahadur in 1899. Dastur Sardar Kaikobad Adarbad Dastur Noshirwan presided over the first of the Zoroastrian conferences organized by Dastur Dhalla in 1910. These annual conferences became associated with reform movements, but at the first one Dhalla was seeking the support of all sections of the community, including the Orthodox. The invitation to preside at the conference may therefore be taken as a marker of widespread respect (Patel and Paymaster, IV, p. 85). In 1911, he was made Shams-ul Ulema at the Delhi Coronation durbar on the visit of the new British monarch, George V, a prestigious religious recognition (Patel and Paymaster, IV, p. 63). He was also a dastur that faced Orthodox anger. In 1911 he and Dastur J. JamaspAsa of Bombay performed the *naujote* of the second daughter of R. D. Tata and his French wife, and then in 1914 he went to Burma and performed the *naujote* of Bella, an adopted non-Parsi, which provoked a court case in Burma and then was laid before the Privy Council in London (Palsetia, pp. 251-75).

Faced with an outcry, he made a public promise not to undertake such an act again (Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 10), but his attitude to intermarriage, indeed conversion, remained unchanged as reflected in a paper that he read at a conference of world religions held in London in 1924. He asserted that Zoroastrianism was the only religion appropriate for all communities in the world and argued that its tenets were applicable to modern times (Patel and Paymaster, VI, p. 173). Before and after him, Poona Parsis had generally been seen as Orthodox, but he appears to have been an exception to the rule. The high priestly lineage continued to display academic interests in this city famed for its scholarship. Naturally, not all members of the lineage became dasturs; some went into business, some worked for the Nizam, while others entered British government service.

A distinctive feature of the Poona community was the number of Iranian Zoroastrians who arrived there as refugees. It is difficult to give many details because most were not wealthy or powerful. Several opened tea-shops and restaurants (Diddee and Gupta, p. 235). They moved from Bombay to avoid the monsoons, but many appear to have faced, if not discrimination, a rather patronizing attitude from Parsis. An exception to the general lack of information on the Iranians in Poona is Aspandiyar N. Khairabadi, who died in 1899 at the age of 116. He had been orphaned at an early age and worked in a tailor's shop before opening his own shop, but then moved into farming. He married at the age of fifty-two in 1837, and migrated to Bombay in 1858 to escape persecution. He moved on to Poona, where he worked at the funeral grounds, Dungenwadi, for sixteen years, a lowly level of employment, but it is said that all Poona Parsis went to his funeral (Patel and Paymaster, III, p. 741). At the turn of the century there were 1,900 Parsis in Poona (*Gazetteer on Poona*, p. 181).

*Karachi.* A da□-ma was opened in Karachi for the first time in 1848, a larger Anjuman da□-ma was opened in 1875 (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 501; Patel, pp. 128, 217-18, 224) and this may be taken as evidence of the early stages of a community as opposed to a few individuals who had settled as suppliers to the British forces in Sind. The first temple was opened in 1849 (Patel, p. 132) and a second in 1869. One important early settler was Ardashir C. Wadia, who, after he retired as chief engineer of the Bombay dockyard, was appointed chief resident engineer of the Indus Flotilla Company in Karachi in 1861, the start of Pakistan's major port. Between 1891 and 1894, Parsis in Sind started three newspapers, one of which, *Sindh Vartman*, was an influential paper (Patel and Paymaster, III p. 379).



A remarkable feature of early Parsi history in Karachi is the speed with which community institutions, religious and secular alike, were established. In sixty-one years (1849-1911, by which time numbers had grown to 2,411), they started two da□mas (1848, 1875), two temples (1849, 1869), two schools (1859, 1880), four housing projects (1854, 1889, 1903, 1911, i.e. establishing homes for the poor and widows long before such moves started in Bombay), two charitable dispensaries (1882, 1887), a dharmshala (1888), a social and sports center (1894), a maternity hospital (1909), and a Young Man's Zoroastrian Association (1910; Hinnells, 2005, pp. 204-12; Punthekey, passim). There were two factors at work: first, from the onset of the arrivals there was an intention to establish a community; second, as traders, they had the funds to provide these resources. Initially, they were suppliers in the Afghan wars (q.v.), but later were engaged in other trades, notably liquor. They were instrumental in the development of Karachi as a major trading center. In addition to Wadia's role at the port, others pioneered the tramway network (Hormusji J. Rustomji in 1884), and the establishment of the Chamber of Commerce (Ardashir and Co in 1860); Edulji Dinshaw and Son were one of the largest firms in Karachi during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A fund was started in 1888 to aid Iranian Zoroastrian refugees, several of whom, as in Poona, opened teashops.

Education was a key focus of Parsi life in Karachi. By the 1880s, the number of boys and girls attending school were approximately equal, evidently a case of gender parity in the educational sphere years ahead of its time. They were also leaders in higher education; for example, in 1885 Edulji Dinshaw, H. J. Rustomji, and J. H. Kothari established the Sind Arts College. It is a tradition that continued into the 20th century with the funding of the Dinshaw Engineering College, which later became a university. Dastur M. N. Dhalla (1875-1956), following his M.A. and then Ph.D. at Columbia University (1904-08), established a religious educational program that, inspired by his own deep devotion, resulted in wider and more comprehensive knowledge and practice of Zoroastrianism among the community at large.

As in other centers, Parsi charity, though primarily donated to communal causes, was also inter-communal. The major figure in this was Edulji Dinshaw, whose main charities were devoted to medical concerns: a women's hospital in 1891, and especially as the main donor for the establishment of the Lady Dufferin Hospital, Karachi's largest (Foundation stone laid 1894, see Patel and Paymaster, III, pp. 363, 495).

### Parsis in the 20th Century India :

The Industrial Revolution in 19th-century India had its impact on Gujarat with, for example, the building of cotton ginning factories in Broach. Most of the major developments, however, were in the city of Bombay, which gradually resulted in an increasing concentration of the Parsi community in the metropolis; however, at the start of the 20th century the majority of Parsis still lived elsewhere. A major force for change and migration had been the assumption of rule in India from the East India Company by the British Parliament and the Crown in 1858, after the Indian Mutiny. Although power rested ultimately with the company's Court of Directors in London, prior to 1857 effective influence was exercised by the people of India at a local level. It was knowledge of local or specialized trade (e.g., cotton) that gave individuals influence with the company. After 1857, influence had to be exerted in London on members of parliament, which meant that people had to be able to argue in Western terms that required, above all, a legal education. This national and international perspective gave increasing powers to the major conurbations such as Bombay, which prompted Parsis and others to move to these

centers. The trend resulted in increasing urbanization, which also led to fragmentation as communities grew in new centers, such as Delhi and Karachi. This concentration on Bombay continued through the 20th century.

The Table highlights the fact that significant change occurred after Independence (on the early 20th century Parsi migrations, see Pithawalla and Rustomji). Migration to Bombay was mainly undertaken by young, active males with the result that rural communities increasingly consisted of the elderly and the disabled. The problem was exacerbated by some of the socialist policies of the government after Independence. First, under Mahatma Gandhi's influence, prohibition was introduced, and, as most Parsis in Gujarat had made their living from the toddy production, many became unemployed. Landowners were restricted in what they could do with their land if they had tenant farmers, and further, defined by a list, to whom the option to buy should be given. A third factor was nationalization of public transport, a business many Parsis had turned to. As a result, from the late 1950s rural Parsis became increasingly impoverished (Shah, *passim*; Mistry, *passim*; Vajifda, *passim*; Marshal, *passim*; Bhaya, *passim*).

The picture painted is usually one of Parsi decline in the 20th century, but it must be borne in mind that from their Bombay base some Parsis, notably the Tatas and the Godrej families, exerted a major influence on the industrial revolution. The Tatas started India's steel industry, and its major airline until it was nationalized, and donated considerable funds to scientific research in particular. Their political role and educational achievements have been discussed in the entry on Bombay (see BOMBAY i. THE ZOROASTRIAN COMMUNITY). Parsis of India contributed substantially, in proportion to their numbers, to the British war effort in both World Wars, both through financial donations to equip the forces and in terms of lives lost (Hinnells, 2000, pp. 288-90; Dalal, *passim*).

In the 20th century, Parsis throughout India have shown an increasing interest in their own history. This began in the 1890s with the new building for Irān-šāh at Udwada (Patel and Paymaster, III, pp. 426, 491; Patel, pp. 422-29). In the early years of the 20th century, roads and a dharmśala were built to cater for the growing number of pilgrims (Patel, pp. 471; Patel and Paymaster, IV, p. 3), and in 1921 a thanksgiving *jašan* was celebrated to mark the 1,200 year anniversary of the consecration of Irān-šāh (Patel and Paymaster, VI, p. 20). In 1917 the Bombay Parsi Panchayat agreed to fund a memorial column at Sanjān to commemorate the Parsis' arrival in India. This was publicly unveiled in 1920, when three trainloads of Parsis came from Bombay and one from Surat. Additionally, large numbers came from surrounding villages to attend the public *jašan* and a dharmśala was built nearby for pilgrims (Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 79).

This sense of history has been developed both by the large number of books about the community written from within, and by formal bodies and institutions that, although based in Bombay, have much wider influence. The monthly magazine *Parsiana* started in the 1960s but was taken over in the early 1970s and transformed into a professionally produced magazine that circulates among Parsi communities throughout India and the Diaspora. It includes articles on both religious and secular matters and periodically runs a series reproducing important earlier texts such as the judgment in the 1906 legal test case on intermarriage. Another Bombay based organization with both a national and an international role is *Zoroastrian Studies*, which was started in the 1970s by Khojeste P. Mistree, who had studied Zoroastrian

studies at Oxford. Its primary function is to educate young Zoroastrians in their religion, but it also runs classes for adults and has become involved in wider policy issues, representing the Orthodox voice on such matters as intermarriage and funerals. It pioneered religious pilgrimages to Iran, and Mistree often visits diasporic communities, giving lectures and seminars (Hinnells, 2005, pp. 106-9).

In 1972 an umbrella body called "The Federation of Parsi Anjumans of India" was formed, linking all Parsi anjumans and panchayats throughout India. The ex-officio chairman is the chairman of the Bombay Parsi Panchayat with the chairs of Delhi and Calcutta as vice-chairs. The aim was for the larger groups to support smaller anjumans in social concerns, but religious affairs are avoided in the hope of steering clear of dissension. The intention is to support smaller groups which do not have the resources to maintain properties. It has no effective powers but functions as a debating body.

All the demographic studies of Indian Parsis report an aging and numerically diminishing community (Hinnells, 2005, pp. 44-54). With their high educational levels of achievement, and consequent success in professional lives, more Parsis, men and women alike, are postponing marriage or remaining single to pursue their chosen careers. The long-term problem of care for the elderly in the community causes concern, but the most contentious issue remains the acceptance of those who inter-marry and their spouses and offspring. Some argue that, unless they are accepted into the fold, the community will eventually die out, while others argue that intermarriage will erode the distinctiveness of the community. The disputes are extensive and bitter.

There are other contentious issues, notably regarding funerals. Where a da□-ma does not exist, then burial or cremation is accepted as necessary, but in the 1990s a virus destroyed the vulture population in Bombay. There was fierce debate over possible alternatives. At first one group planned, with the aid of a veterinary specialist, to build a large aviary to breed vultures, but that proved impractical, costly, and vulnerable to the re-emergence of the virus. Solar panels have been tried to speed the decomposition of the body, but it seems that the ancient practice of exposing the dead is under threat in India. The calendar debates, fuelled in the early 20th century by the introduction of the seasonal (*fasli*) calendar which accords with the Gregorian, are not a matter of debate in India.

One striking feature of Parsis in the 20th century is their increasing interaction with the diaspora. As more have migrated overseas, so the diaspora communities have grown in size, wealth, and influence. Parsi leaders travel to much of the diaspora, and overseas funds aid such projects as housing colonies in Navsari and the Parsi General Hospital in Bombay. Debates in the old country and the new world take on an international perspective in a way that was not the case before the 20th century.

Source :

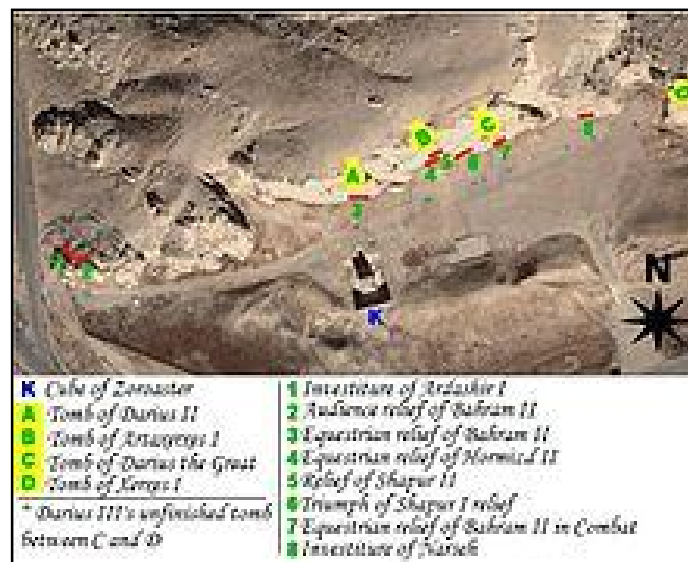
<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/parsi-communities-i-early-history>

### 34. Naqsh-e Rostam :

Naqsh-e Rostam (Persian: نقش رستم [ˌnæxʃɾosˈtæm]) is an ancient necropolis located about 12 km northwest of Persepolis, in Fars Province, Iran, with a group of ancient Iranian rock reliefs cut into the cliff, from both the Achaemenid and Sassanid periods. It lies a few hundred meters from Naqsh-e Rostam, with a further four Sassanid rock reliefs, three celebrating kings and one a high priest.

Naqsh-e Rostam is the necropolis of the Achaemenid dynasty (c. 550–330 BC), with four large tombs cut high into the cliff face. These have mainly architectural decoration, but the facades include large panels over the doorways, each very similar in content, with figures of the king being invested by a god, above a zone with rows of smaller figures bearing tribute, with soldiers and officials. The three classes of figures are sharply differentiated in size. The entrance to each tomb is at the center of each cross, which opens onto a small chamber, where the king lay in a sarcophagus.

Well below the Achaemenid tombs, near ground level, are rock reliefs with large figures of Sassanian kings, some meeting gods, others in combat. The most famous shows the Sassanian king Shapur I on horseback, with the Roman Emperor Valerian bowing to him in submission, and Philip the Arab (an earlier emperor who paid Shapur tribute) holding Shapur's horse, while the dead Emperor Gordian III, killed in battle, lies beneath it (other identifications have been suggested). This commemorates the Battle of Edessa in 260 AD, when Valerian became the only Roman Emperor who was captured as a prisoner of war, a lasting humiliation for the Romans. The placing of these reliefs clearly suggests the Sassanid intention to link themselves with the glories of the earlier Achaemenid Empire.



## Monuments :



**Panorama of Naqsh-e Rostam**



**Upper register of the Achaemenid Tomb of Xerxes I**

The oldest relief at Naqsh-e Rostam dates back to c. 1000 BC. Though it is severely damaged, it depicts a faint image of a man with unusual head-gear, and is thought to be Elamite in origin. The depiction is part of a larger mural, most of which was removed at the command of Bahram II. The man with the unusual cap gives the site its name, *Naqsh-e Rostam* ("Rustam Relief" or "Relief of Rustam"), because the relief was locally believed to be a depiction of the mythical hero Rustam.

## Achaemenid tombs :

Four tombs belonging to Achaemenid kings are carved out of the rock face at a considerable height above the ground. The tombs are sometimes known as the *Persian crosses*, after the shape of the facades of the tombs. The entrance to each tomb is at the center of each cross, which opens onto a small chamber, where the king lay in a sarcophagus. The horizontal beam of each of the tomb's facades is believed to be a replica of a Persepolitan entrance.

One of the tombs is explicitly identified, by an accompanying inscription ("parsa parsahya puthra ariya ariyachitra", meaning, "a Parsi, the son of a Parsi, an Aryan, of Aryan family), as the tomb of Darius I (c. 522-486 BC). The other three tombs are believed to be those of Xerxes I (c. 486-465 BC), Artaxerxes I (c. 465-424 BC), and Darius II (c. 423-404 BC)

respectively. The order of the tombs in Naqsh-e Rostam follows (left to right): Darius II, Artaxerxes I, Darius I, Xerxes I. The matching of the other kings to tombs is somewhat speculative; the relief figures are not intended as individualized portraits.

A fifth unfinished one might be that of Artaxerxes III, who reigned at the longest two years, but is more likely that of Darius III (c. 336-330 BC), the last king of the Achaemenid Dynasts. The tombs were looted following the conquest of the Achaemenid Empire by Alexander the Great.

#### Darius I inscription :

An inscription by Darius I, from c.490 BCE, generally referred to as the "DNA inscription" in scholarly works, appears in the top left corner of the facade of his tomb. It mentions the conquests of Darius I and his various achievements during his life. Its exact date is not known, but it can be assumed to be from the last decade of his reign. Like several other inscriptions by Darius, the territories controlled by the Achaemenid Empire are clearly listed, in particular the areas of the Indus and Gandhar in India, referring to the Achaemenid occupation of the Indus Valley.

#### (DNA inscription) :

A great god is Ahuramazda, who created this earth, who created yonder sky, who created man, who created happiness for man, who made Darius king, one king of many, one lord of many.

I am Darius the great king, king of kings, king of countries containing all kinds of men, king in this great earth far and wide, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenid, a Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan, having Aryan lineage.

King Darius says: By the favor of Ahuramazda these are the countries which I seized outside of Persia; I ruled over them; they bore tribute to me; they did what was said to them by me; they held my law firmly; Media, Elam, Parthia, Aria, Bactria, Sogdia, Chorasmia, Drangiana, Arachosia, Sattagydia, Gandara [Gadâra], India [Hiduš], the haoma-drinking Scythians, the Scythians with pointed caps, Babylonia, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, Armenia, Cappadocia, Lydia, the Greeks (Yauna), the Scythians across the sea (Sakâ), Thrace, the petasos-wearing Greeks [Yaunâ], the Libyans, the Nubians, the men of Maka and the Carians.

King Darius says: Ahuramazda, when he saw this earth in commotion, thereafter bestowed it upon me, made me king; I am king. By the favor of Ahuramazda I put it down in its place; what I said to them, that they did, as was my desire.

If now you shall think that "How many are the countries which King Darius held?" look at the sculptures [of those] who bear the throne, then shall you know, then shall it become known to you: the spear of a Persian man has gone forth far; then shall it become known to you: a Persian man has delivered battle far indeed from Persia.

Darius the King says: This which has been done, all that by the will of Ahuramazda I did. Ahuramazda bore me aid, until I did the work. May Ahuramazda protect me from harm, and my royal house, and this land: this I pray of Ahuramazda, this may Ahuramazda give to me! O man, that which is the command of Ahuramazda, let this not seem repugnant to you; do not leave the right path; do not rise in rebellion!

Ka'ba-ye Zartosht :



**Cube of Zoroaster, a cube-shaped construction in the foreground, against the backdrop of Naqsh-e Rostam**

Ka'ba-ye Zartosht (meaning the "Cube of Zoroaster") is a 5th-century B.C Achaemenid square tower. The structure is a copy of a sister building at Pasargadae, the "Prison of Solomon" (*Zendān-e Solaymān*). It was built either by Darius I (r. 521–486 BCE) when he moved to Persepolis, by Artaxerxes II (r. 404–358 BCE) or Artaxerxes III (r. 358–338 BCE). The building at Pasargadae is a few decades older. There are four inscriptions in three languages from the Sasanian period on the lower exterior walls. They are considered among the most important inscriptions from this period.

Several theories exist regarding the purpose of the Ka'ba-ye Zartosht structure.

## Sassanid reliefs :

Seven over-life sized rock reliefs at Naqsh-e Rostam depict monarchs of the Sassanid period. Their approximate dates range from 225 to 310 AD, and they show subjects including investiture scenes and battles.



**The investiture of Ardashir I**



**The triumph of Shapur I over the Roman emperors Valerian and Philip the Arab**

## Investiture relief of Ardashir I, c. 226–242 :

The founder of the Sassanid Empire is seen being handed the ring of kingship by Ohrmazd. In the inscription, which also bears the oldest attested use of the term *Iran*, Ardashir admits to betraying his pledge to Artabanus V (the Persians having been a vassal state of the Arsacid Parthians), but legitimizes his action on the grounds that Ohrmazd had wanted him to do so. The word *ērān* is first attested in the inscriptions that accompany the investiture relief of Ardashir I (r. 224–242) at Naqsh-e Rostam. In this bilingual inscription, the king calls himself "Ardashir, king of kings of the Iranians" (Middle Persian: ardašīr šāhān šāh ī ērān; Parthian: ardašīr šāhān šāh ī aryān).



### Triumph of Shapur I, c. 241–272) :

This is the most famous of the Sassanid rock reliefs, and depicts the victory of Shapur I over two Roman emperors, Valerian and Philip the Arab. Behind the king stands *Kirtir*, the *mūbadān mūbad* ('high priest'), the most powerful of the Zoroastrian Magi during the history of Iran. A more elaborate version of this rock relief is at Bishapur.

In an inscription, Shapur I claims possession of the territory of the Kushans (Kūšān šahr) as far as "Purushapura" (Peshawar), suggesting he controlled Bactria and areas as far as the Hindu-Kush or even south of it:

I, the Mazda-worshipping lord, Shapur, king of kings of Iran and An-Iran... (I) am the Master of the Domain of Iran (Ērānšahr) and possess the territory of Persis, Parthian... Hindestan, the Domain of the Kushan up to the limits of Paškabur and up to Kash, Sughd, and Chachestan.

— *Naqsh-e Rostam inscription of Shapur I*

### "Grandee" relief of Bahram II, c. 276–293 :



### **The grandee relief of Bahram II**

On each side of the king, who is depicted with an oversized sword, figures face the king. On the left, stand five figures, perhaps members of the king's family (three having diadems, suggesting they were royalty). On the right, stand three courtiers, one of which may be Kartir. This relief is to the immediate right of the investiture inscription of Ardashir, and partially replaces the much older relief that gives the name of Naqsh-e Rostam.

### Two equestrian reliefs of Bahram II, c. 276–293 :

The first equestrian relief, located immediately below the fourth tomb (perhaps that of Darius II), depicts the king battling a mounted Roman enemy. The second equestrian relief, located immediately below the tomb of Darius I, is divided into two registers, an upper and a lower one. In the upper register, the king appears to be forcing a Roman enemy, probably Roman emperor Carus from his horse. In the lower register, the king is again battling a mounted enemy wearing a headgear shaped as an animal's head, thought to be the vanquished Indo-Sassanian ruler Hormizd I Kushanshah. Both reliefs depict a dead enemy under the hooves of the king's horse.



**First equestrian relief**



**The two-panel equestrian relief**



**Hormizd I Kushanshah on the lower panel**

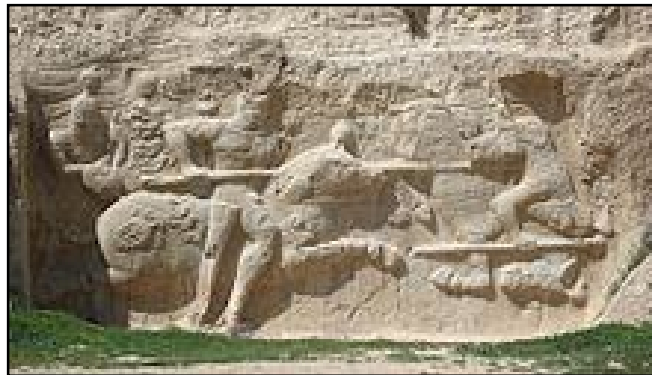
Investiture of Narseh, c. 293–303 :



**The investiture of Narseh**

In this relief, the king is depicted as receiving the ring of kingship from a female figure that is frequently assumed to be the divinity Aredvi Sura Anahita. However, the king is not depicted in a pose that would be expected in the presence of a divinity, and it is hence likely that the woman is a relative, perhaps Queen Shapurdukhtak of Sakastan.

Equestrian relief of Hormizd II, c 303–309 :



**The equestrian relief of Hormizd II**

This relief is below tomb 3 (perhaps that of Artaxerxes I) and depicts Hormizd forcing an enemy (perhaps Papak of Armenia) from his horse. Immediately above the relief and below the tomb is a badly damaged relief of what appears to be Shapur II (c. 309–379) accompanied by courtiers.

Archaeology :



**Ka'ba-ye Zartosht in foreground, with behind the Tomb of Darius II above Sassanid equestrian relief of Bahram II**

In 1923, the German archaeologist Ernst Herzfeld made casts of the inscriptions on the tomb of Darius I. Since 1946, these casts have been held in the archives of the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, DC.

Naqsh-e Rostam was excavated for several seasons between 1936 and 1939 by a team from the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, led by Erich Schmidt.

Source :

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naqsh-e\\_Rostam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naqsh-e_Rostam)

### 35. Parsis in India :

Parsis (/ˈpɑːrsiː/) or Parsees (which means 'Persian' in the Persian language) are a Zoroastrian community who migrated to the Indian subcontinent from Persia during the Muslim conquest of Persia of CE 636–651; one of two such groups (the other being Iranis). According to the *Qissa-i Sanjan*, Parsis migrated from Greater Iran to Gujarat, where they were given refuge, between the 8th and 10th century CE to avoid persecution following the Muslim conquest of Persia.

At the time of the Muslim conquest of Persia, the dominant religion of the region (which was ruled by the Sasanian Empire) was Zoroastrianism. Iranians such as Babak Khorramdin rebelled against Muslim conquerors for almost 200 years. During this time many Iranians (who are now called Parsis since the migration to India) chose to preserve their religious identity by fleeing from Persia to India.

The word پارسیان, pronounced "Parsian", i.e., "Parsi" in the Persian language, literally means *Persian*. Note that *Farsi* is an arabization of the word *Parsi* which is used as an endonym of Persian, and Persian language is spoken in Iran, Afghanistan, Tajkistan, and some other former regions of the Persian Empire.

The long presence of the Parsis in India distinguishes them from the smaller Zoroastrian Indian community of Iranis, who are much more recent arrivals, mostly descended from Zoroastrians fleeing the repression of the Qajar dynasty and the general social and political tumult of late 19th- and early 20th-century Iran. After having spent centuries in South Gujarat, particularly Udvada, Valsad and Navsari, the majority of the Parsi diaspora speak Gujarati.

#### Definition and identity :

According to the Encyclopædia Britannica,

Parsi, also spelled Parsee, member of a group of followers in India of the Persian prophet Zoroaster. The Parsis, whose name means "Persians", are descended from Persian Zoroastrians who emigrated to India to avoid religious persecution by the Muslims. They live chiefly in Mumbai and in a few towns and villages mostly to the south of Mumbai, but also a few minorities nearby in Karachi (Pakistan) and Bangalore (Karnataka, India). There is a sizeable Parsee population in Pune as well in Hyderabad. A few Parsee families also reside in Kolkata and Chennai. Although they are not, strictly speaking, a caste, since they are not Hindus, they form a well-defined community. The exact date of the Parsi migration is unknown. According to tradition, the Parsis initially settled at Hormuz on the Persian Gulf but finding themselves still persecuted they set sail for India, arriving in the 8th century. The migration may, in fact, have taken place as late as the 10th century, or in both. They settled first at Diu in Kathiawar but soon moved to South Gujarāt, where they remained for about 800 years as a small agricultural community.

The term *Pārsi*, which in the Persian language is a demonym meaning "inhabitant of Pārs" and hence "ethnic Persian", is not attested in Indian Zoroastrian texts until the 17th century. Until that time, such texts consistently use the Persian-origin terms *Zartoshti* "Zoroastrian"

or *Vehdin* "[of] the good religion". The 12th-century *Sixteen Shloks*, a Sanskrit text in praise of the Parsis, is the earliest attested use of the term as an identifier for Indian Zoroastrians.

Parsis from India, c. 1870

The first reference to the Parsis in a European language is from 1322, when a French monk, Jordanus, briefly refers to their presence in Thane and Bharuch. Subsequently, the term appears in the journals of many European travelers, first French and Portuguese, later English, all of whom used a Europeanized version of an apparently local language term. For example, Portuguese physician Garcia de Orta observed in 1563 that "there are merchants ... in the kingdom of Cambaia ... known as Esparcis. We Portuguese call them Jews, but they are not so. They are Gentios." In an early 20th-century legal ruling (see self-perceptions, below), Justices Davar and Beaman asserted (1909:540) that "Parsi" was also a term used in Iran to refer to Zoroastrians. notes that in much the same way as the word "Hindu" was used by Iranians to refer to anyone from the Indian subcontinent, "Parsi" was used by the Indians to refer to anyone from Greater Iran, irrespective of whether they were actually ethnic Persian people. In any case, the term "Parsi" itself is "not necessarily an indication of their Iranian or 'Persian' origin, but rather as indicator – manifest as several properties – of ethnic identity". Moreover, if heredity were the only factor in a determination of ethnicity, the Parsis would count as Parthians according to the *Qissa-i Sanjan*.

The term "Parseeism" or "Parsiism" is attributed to Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil-Duperron, who in the 1750s, when the word "Zoroastrianism" had yet to be coined, made the first detailed report of the Parsis and of Zoroastrianism, therein mistakenly assuming that the Parsis were the only remaining followers of the religion.

In addition to above, the Parsi identity was well truly an identity even before they moved to India:

The earliest reference to the Parsis is found in the Assyrian inscription of Shalmaneser III (circa 854-824 BC).

**Darius the Great (521-486 BC) establishes this fact when he records his Parsi ancestry for posterity, "parsa parsahya puthra ariya ariyachitra", meaning, "a Parsi, the son of a Parsi, an Aryan, of Aryan family (Inscription at Naqsh-e-Rostam, near Persepolis, Iran).**

In *Outlines of Parsi History*, Dasturji Hormazdyar Dastur Kayoji Mirza, Bombay 1987, pp. 3-4 writes, "According to the Pahlavi text of *Karnamak i Artakhshir i Papakan*, the Indian astrologer refers to Artakhshir (Sasanian king, and the founder of the Empire) as *khvatay parsikan* 'the king of the Parsis'.

Herodotus and Xenophon, the two great historians who lived in the third and fourth centuries BC referred to Iranians as Parsis.

## Origins :

In ancient Persia, Zoroaster taught that good (Ohrmazd) and evil (Angra Mainyu) were opposite forces and the battle between them is more or less evenly matched. A person should always be vigilant to align with forces of light. According to the *asha* or the righteousness and *druj* or the wickedness, the person has chosen in his life they will be judged at the Chinvat bridge to grant passage to Paradise, Hammistagan (A limbo area) or Hell by a sword. A personified form of the soul that represents the person's deeds takes the adjudged to their destination and they will abide there until the final apocalypse. After the final battle between good and evil, every soul's walk through a river of fire ordeal for burning of their dross and together they receive a post resurrection paradise. The Zoroastrian holy book, called the *Avesta*, was written in the Avestan language, which is closely related to Vedic Sanskrit.

The *Qissa-i Sanjan* is a tale of the journey of the Parsis to India from Iran. It says they fled for reasons of religious freedom and they were allowed to settle in India thanks to the goodwill of a local prince. However, the Parsi community had to abide by three rules: they had to speak the local language, follow local marriage customs, and not carry any weapons. After showing the many similarities between their faith and local beliefs, the early community was granted a plot of land on which to build a fire temple.

## As an ethnic community :



**Wedding portrait, 1948**

Over the centuries since the first Zoroastrians arrived in India, the Parsis have integrated themselves into Indian society while simultaneously maintaining or developing their own distinct customs and traditions (and thus ethnic identity). This in turn has given the Parsi community a rather peculiar standing: they are Indians in terms of national affiliation, language and history, but not typically Indian in terms of consanguinity or ethnicity, cultural, behavioural and religious practices. Genealogical DNA tests to determine purity of lineage have brought mixed results. One study supports the Parsi contention that they have maintained their Persian roots by avoiding intermarriage with local populations. In that 2002 study of the Y-chromosome (patrilineal) DNA of the Parsis of Pakistan, it was determined that Parsis are genetically closer to Iranians than to their neighbours.

A 2004 study in which Parsi mitochondrial DNA (matrilineal) was compared with that of the Iranians and Gujaratis determined that Parsis are genetically closer to Gujaratis than to

Iranians. Taking the 2002 study into account, the authors of the 2004 study suggested "a male-mediated migration of the ancestors of the present-day Parsi population, where they admixed with local females leading ultimately to the loss of mtDNA of Iranian origin". To put all the doubts to rest a deeper study was conducted in 2017 "Like sugar in milk": reconstructing the genetic history of the Parsi population which confirms that Parsis are genetically closer to Neolithic Iranians than to modern Iranians, who have witnessed a more recent wave of admixture from the Near East.

#### Self-perceptions :



#### **Parsi Navjote ceremony (rites of admission into the Zoroastrian faith)**

The definition of who is, and is not, a Parsi is a matter of great contention within the Zoroastrian community in India. It is generally accepted that a Parsi is a person who:

(a) is directly descended from the original Persian refugees and,

(b) has been formally admitted into the Zoroastrian religion, through the navjote ceremony.

In this sense, *Parsi* is an ethno-religious designator, whose definition is of contention among its members, similar to the contention over who is a Jew in the West.

Some members of the community additionally contend that a child must have a Parsi father to be eligible for introduction into the faith, but this assertion is considered by most to be a violation of the Zoroastrian tenets of gender equality and may be a remnant of an old legal definition of the term Parsi.

An oft-quoted legal definition of Parsi is based on a 1909 ruling (since nullified) that not only stipulated that a person could not become a Parsi by converting to the Zoroastrian faith but also noted:



The Parsi community consists of: a) Parsis who are descended from the original Persian emigrants and who are born of both Zoroastrian parents and who profess the Zoroastrian religion; b) Iranis [here meaning Iranians, not the other group of Indian Zoroastrians] professing the Zoroastrian religion; c) the children of Parsi fathers by alien mothers who have been duly and properly admitted into the religion.

This definition was overturned several times. The equality principles of the Indian Constitution void the patrilineal restrictions expressed in the third clause. The second clause was contested and overturned in 1948. On appeal in 1950, the 1948 ruling was upheld and the entire 1909 definition was deemed an obiter dictum – a collateral opinion and not legally binding (re-affirmed in 1966).

There is a growing voice within the community that if indeed equality must be re-established then the only acceptable solution is to only allow a child to be initiated into the faith if both parents are Parsi.

Nonetheless, the opinion that the 1909 ruling is legally binding continues to persist, even among the better-read and moderate Parsis.

#### Population :

According to the 2011 Census of India, there are 57,264 Parsis in India. According to the National Commission for Minorities, there are a "variety of causes that are responsible for this steady decline in the population of the community", the most significant of which were childlessness and migration. Demographic trends project that by the year 2020 the Parsis will number only 23,000. The Parsis will then cease to be called a community and will be labeled a 'tribe'.

One-fifth of the decrease in population is attributed to migration. A slower birthrate than deathrate accounts for the rest: as of 2001, Parsis over the age of 60 make up for 31% of the community. Only 4.7% of the Parsi community are under 6 years of age, which translates to 7 births per year per 1000 individuals. Concerns have been raised in recent years over the rapidly declining population of the Parsi community in India.

#### Other demographic statistics :

The gender ratio among Parsis is unusual: as of 2001, the ratio of males to females was 1000 males to 1050 females (up from 1024 in 1991), due primarily to the high median age of the population (elderly women are more common than elderly men). As of 2001 the national average in India was 1000 males to 933 females.

Parsis have a high literacy rate; as of 2001, the literacy rate is 97.9%, the highest of any Indian community (the national average was 64.8%). 96.1% of Parsis reside in urban areas (the national average is 27.8%).

In the Greater Mumbai area, where the density of Parsis is highest, about 10% of Parsi females and about 20% of Parsi males do not marry.

## History :

### Arrival in the Indian sub-continent :

According to the *Qissa-i Sanjan*, the only existing account of the early years of Zoroastrian refugees in India composed at least six centuries after their tentative date of arrival, the first group of immigrants originated from Greater Khorasan. This historical region of Central Asia is in part in northeastern Iran, where it constitutes modern Khorasan Province, part of western/northern Afghanistan, and in part in three Central-Asian republics namely Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

According to the *Qissa*, the immigrants were granted permission to stay by the local ruler, *Jadi Rana*, on the condition that they adopt the local language (Gujarati) and that their women adopt local dress (the *sari*). The refugees accepted the conditions and founded the settlement of Sanjan, which is said to have been named after the city of their origin (Sanjan, near Merv, modern Turkmenistan). This first group was followed by a second group from Greater Khorasan within five years of the first, and this time having religious implements with them (the *alat*). In addition to these *Khorasanis* or *Kohistanis* "mountain folk", as the two initial groups are said to have been initially called, at least one other group is said to have come overland from Sari, Iran.



### **Map of the Sasanian Empire and its surrounding regions on the eve of the Muslim conquest of Persia**

Although the Sanjan group are believed to have been the first permanent settlers, the precise date of their arrival is a matter of conjecture. All estimates are based on the *Qissa*, which is vague or contradictory with respect to some elapsed periods. Consequently, three possible dates – 716, 765, and 936 – have been proposed as the year of landing, and the disagreement has been the cause of "many an intense battle amongst Parsis". Since dates are not specifically mentioned in Parsi texts prior to the 18th century, any date of arrival is perforce a matter of speculation. The importance of the *Qissa* lies in any case not so much in its reconstruction of events than in its depiction of the Parsis – in the way they have come to view themselves –

and in their relationship to the dominant culture. As such, the text plays a crucial role in shaping Parsi identity. But, "even if one comes to the conclusion that the chronicle based on verbal transmission is not more than a legend, it still remains without doubt an extremely informative document for Parsee historiography."

The Sanjan Zoroastrians were certainly not the first Zoroastrians on the subcontinent. Sindh touching Balochistan, the easternmost periphery of the Iranian world, too had once been under coastal administration of the Sasanian Empire (226-651), which consequently maintained outposts there. Even following the loss of Sindh, the Iranians continued to play a major role in the trade links between the east and west. The 9th-century Arab historiographer Al-Masudi briefly notes Zoroastrians with fire temples in al-Hind and in al-Sindh. There is evidence of individual Parsis residing in Sindh in the tenth and twelfth centuries, but the current modern community is thought to date from British arrival in Sindh. Moreover, for the Iranians, the harbours of Gujarat lay on the maritime routes that complemented the overland Silk Road and there were extensive trade relations between the two regions. The contact between Iranians and Indians was already well established even prior to the Common Era, and both the Puranas and the *Mahabharata* use the term *Parasikas* to refer to the peoples west of the Indus River.

"Parsi legends regarding their ancestors' migration to India depict a beleaguered band of religious refugees escaping the new rule post the Muslim conquests in order to preserve their ancient faith." However, while Parsi settlements definitely arose along the western coast of the Indian subcontinent following the Arab conquest of Iran, it is not possible to state with certainty that these migrations occurred as a result of religious persecution against Zoroastrians. If the "traditional" 8th century date (as deduced from the *Qissa*) is considered valid, it must be assumed "that the migration began while Zoroastrianism was still the predominant religion in Iran [and] economic factors predominated the initial decision to migrate." This would have been particularly the case if – as the *Qissa* suggests – the first Parsis originally came from the north-east (i.e. Central Asia) and had previously been dependent on Silk Road trade. Even so, in the 17th century, Henry Lord, a chaplain with the British East India Company, noted that the Parsis came to India seeking "liberty of conscience" but simultaneously arrived as "merchantmen bound for the shores of India, in course of trade and merchandise." The fact that Muslims charged non-Muslims higher duties when trading from Muslim-held ports may be interpreted to be a form of religious persecution, but this being the only reason to migrate appears unlikely.

#### Early years :

The *Qissa* has little to say about the events that followed the establishment of Sanjan, and restricts itself to a brief note on the establishment of the "Fire of Victory" (Middle Persian: *Atash Bahram*) at Sanjan and its subsequent move to Navsari. According to Dhalla, the next several centuries were "full of hardships" (*sic*) before Zoroastrianism "gained a real foothold in India and secured for its adherents some means of livelihood in this new country of their adoption".

Two centuries after their landing, the Parsis began to settle in other parts of Gujarat, which led to "difficulties in defining the limits of priestly jurisdiction." These problems were resolved by 1290 through the division of Gujarat into five *panthaks* (districts), each under the jurisdiction

of one priestly family and their descendants. (Continuing disputes regarding jurisdiction over the *Atash Bahram* led to the fire being moved to Udvada in 1742, where today jurisdiction is shared in rotation among the five *panthak* families.)

Inscriptions at the Kanheri Caves near Mumbai suggest that at least until the early 11th century, Middle Persian was still the literary language of the hereditary Zoroastrian priesthood. Nonetheless, aside from the *Qissa* and the Kanheri inscriptions, there is little evidence of the Parsis until the 12th and 13th century, when "masterly" Sanskrit translations and transcriptions of the Avesta and its commentaries began to be prepared. From these translations Dhalla infers that "religious studies were prosecuted with great zeal at this period" and that the command of Middle Persian and Sanskrit among the clerics "was of a superior order".

From the 13th century to the late 16th century, the Zoroastrian priests of Gujarat sent (in all) twenty-two requests for religious guidance to their co-religionists in Iran, presumably because they considered the Iranian Zoroastrians "better informed on religious matters than themselves, and must have preserved the old-time tradition more faithfully than they themselves did". These transmissions and their replies – assiduously preserved by the community as the *rivayats* (epistles) – span the years 1478–1766 and deal with both religious and social subjects. From a superficial 21st century point of view, some of these *ithoter* ("questions") are remarkably trivial – for instance, *Rivayat* 376: whether ink prepared by a non-Zoroastrian is suitable for copying Avestan language texts – but they provide a discerning insight into the fears and anxieties of the early modern Zoroastrians. Thus, the question of the ink is symptomatic of the fear of assimilation and the loss of identity, a theme that dominates the questions posed and continues to be an issue into the 21st century. So also the question of conversion of *Juddins* (non-Zoroastrians) to Zoroastrianism, to which the reply (R237, R238) was: acceptable, even meritorious.

Nonetheless, "the precarious condition in which they lived for a considerable period made it impracticable for them to keep up their former proselytizing zeal. The instinctive fear of disintegration and absorption in the vast multitudes among whom they lived created in them a spirit of exclusiveness and a strong desire to preserve the racial characteristics and distinctive features of their community. Living in an atmosphere surcharged with the Hindu caste system, they felt that their own safety lay in encircling their fold by rigid caste barriers". Even so, at some point (possibly shortly after their arrival in India), the Zoroastrians – perhaps determining that the social stratification that they had brought with them was unsustainable in the small community – did away with all but the hereditary priesthood (called the *asronih* in Sassanid Iran). The remaining estates – the (*r*)*atheshtarih* (nobility, soldiers, and civil servants), *vastaryoshih* (farmers and herdsman), *hutokshih* (artisans and labourers) – were folded into an all-comprehensive class today known as the *behdini* ("followers of *daena*", for which "good religion" is one translation).

This change would have far reaching consequences. For one, it opened the gene pool to some extent since until that time inter-class marriages were exceedingly rare (this would continue to be a problem for the priesthood until the 20th century). For another, it did away with the boundaries along occupational lines, a factor that would endear the Parsis to the 18th- and 19th-century British colonial authorities who had little patience for the unpredictable

complications of the Hindu caste system (such as when a clerk from one caste would not deal with a clerk from another).

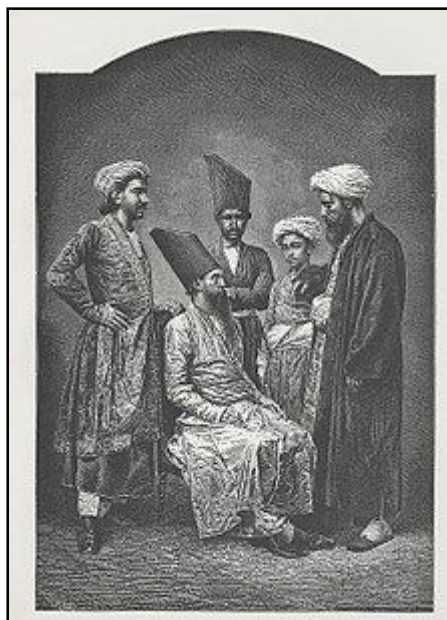
### Age of opportunity :

Following the commercial treaty in the early 17th century between Mughal emperor Jahangir and James I of England, the East India Company obtained the exclusive rights to reside and build factories in Surat and other areas. Many Parsis, who until then had been living in farming communities throughout Gujarat, moved to the English-run settlements to take the new jobs offered. In 1668 the English East India Company leased the Seven Islands of Bombay from Charles II of England. The company found the deep harbour on the east coast of the islands to be ideal for setting up their first port in the sub-continent, and in 1687 they transferred their headquarters from Surat to the fledgling settlement. The Parsis followed and soon began to occupy posts of trust in connection with government and public works.

Where literacy had previously been the exclusive domain of the priesthood, in the era of the British Raj the British schools in India provided the new Parsi youth with the means not only to learn to read and write but also to be educated in the greater sense of the term and become familiar with the quirks of the British establishment. These capabilities were enormously useful to Parsis since they allowed them to "represent themselves as being like the British," which they did "more diligently and effectively than perhaps any other South Asian community". While the British saw the other Indians "as passive, ignorant, irrational, outwardly submissive but inwardly guileful", the Parsis were seen to have the traits that the colonial authorities tended to ascribe to themselves. Johan Albrecht de Mandelslo (1638) saw them as "diligent", "conscientious", and "skillful" in their mercantile pursuits. Similar observations would be made by James Mackintosh, Recorder of Bombay from 1804 to 1811, who noted that "the Parsees are a small remnant of one of the mightiest nations of the ancient world, who, flying from persecution into India, were for many ages lost in obscurity and poverty, till at length they met a just government under which they speedily rose to be one of the most popular mercantile bodies in Asia".

One of these was an enterprising agent named Rustom Maneck. In 1702, Maneck, who had probably already amassed a fortune under the Dutch and Portuguese, was appointed the first broker to the East India Company (acquiring the name "Seth" in the process), and in the following years "he and his Parsi associates widened the occupational and financial horizons of the larger Parsi community". Thus, by the mid-18th century, the brokerage houses of the Bombay Presidency were almost all in Parsi hands. As James Forbes, the Collector of Broach (now Bharuch), would note in his *Oriental Memoirs* (1770): "many of the principal merchants and owners of ships at Bombay and Surat are Parsees." "Active, robust, prudent and persevering, they now form a very valuable part of the Company's subjects on the western shores of Hindustan where they are highly esteemed". In the 18th century, Parsis with their skills in ship building and trade greatly benefited with trade between India and China. The trade was mainly in timber, silk, cotton and opium. For example Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy acquired most of his wealth through trade in cotton and opium. Gradually certain families "acquired wealth and prominence (Sorabji, Modi, Cama, Wadia, Jeejeebhoy, Ready money, Dadyseth, Petit, Patel, Mehta, Allbless, Tata, etc.), many of which would be noted for their participation in the public life of the city, and for their various educational, industrial, and charitable enterprises.").

Through his largesse, Maneck helped establish the infrastructure that was necessary for the Parsis to set themselves up in Bombay and in doing so "established Bombay as the primary centre of Parsi habitation and work in the 1720s". Following the political and economic isolation of Surat in the 1720s and 1730s that resulted from troubles between the (remnant) Mughal authorities and the increasingly dominant Marathas, a number of Parsi families from Surat migrated to the new city. While in 1700 "fewer than a handful of individuals appear as merchants in any records; by mid-century, Parsis engaged in commerce constituted one of important commercial groups in Bombay". Maneck's generosity is incidentally also the first documented instance of Parsi philanthropy. In 1689, Anglican chaplain John Ovington reported that in Surat the family "assist the poor and are ready to provide for the sustenance and comfort of such as want it. Their universal kindness, either employing such as are ready and able to work, or bestowing a seasonable bounteous charity to such as are infirm and miserable, leave no man destitute of relief, nor suffer a beggar in all their tribe".



**"Parsis of Bombay" a wood engraving, ca. 1878**

In 1728 Rustom's eldest son Naoroz (later Naorojee) founded the *Bombay Parsi Panchayat* (in the sense of an instrument for self-governance and not in the sense of the trust it is today) to assist newly arriving Parsis in religious, social, legal and financial matters. Using their vast resources, the Maneck Seth family gave their time, energy and not inconsiderable financial resources to the Parsi community, with the result that by the mid-18th century, the Panchayat was the accepted means for Parsis to cope with the exigencies of urban life and the recognized instrument for regulating the affairs of the community. Nonetheless, by 1838 the Panchayat was under attack for impropriety and nepotism. In 1855 the *Bombay Times* noted that the Panchayat was utterly without the moral or legal authority to enforce its statutes (the *Bundobusts* or codes of conduct) and the council soon ceased to be considered representative of the community. In the wake of a July 1856 ruling by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council that it had no jurisdiction over the Parsis in matters of marriage and divorce, the Panchayat was reduced to little more than a Government-recognized "Parsi Matrimonial Court". Although the Panchayat would eventually be reestablished as the administrator of community property, it ultimately ceased to be an instrument for self-governance.

At about the same time as the role of the Panchayat was declining, a number of other institutions arose that would replace the Panchayat's role in contributing to the sense of social cohesiveness that the community desperately sought. By the mid-19th century, the Parsis were keenly aware that their numbers were declining and saw education as a possible solution to the problem. In 1842 Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy established the Parsi Benevolent Fund with the aim of improving, through education, the condition of the impoverished Parsis still living in Surat and its environs. In 1849 the Parsis established their first school (co-educational, which was a novelty at the time, but would soon be split into separate schools for boys and girls) and the education movement quickened. The number of Parsi schools multiplied, but other schools and colleges were also freely attended. Accompanied by better education and social cohesiveness, the community's sense of distinctiveness grew, and in 1854 Dinshaw Maneckji Petit founded the Persian Zoroastrian Amelioration Fund with the aim of improving conditions for his less fortunate co-religionists in Iran. The fund succeeded in convincing a number of Iranian Zoroastrians to emigrate to India (where they are known today as Iranis) and the efforts of its emissary Maneckji Limji Hataria may have been instrumental in obtaining a remission of the jizya for their co-religionists in 1882.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Parsis had emerged as "the foremost people in India in matters educational, industrial, and social. They came in the vanguard of progress, amassed vast fortunes, and munificently gave away large sums in charity". By the close of the 19th century, the total number of Parsis in colonial India was 85,397, of which 48,507 lived in Bombay, constituting 6% of the total population of the city (Census, 1881). This would be the last time that the Parsis would be considered a numerically significant minority in the city.

Nonetheless, the legacy of the 19th century was a sense of self-awareness as a community. The typically Parsi cultural symbols of the 17th and 18th centuries such as language (a Parsi variant of Gujarati), arts, crafts, and sartorial habits developed into Parsi theatre, literature, newspapers, magazines, and schools. The Parsis now ran community medical centres, ambulance corps, Scouting troops, clubs, and Masonic Lodges. They had their own charitable foundations, housing estates, legal institutions, courts, and governance. They were no longer weavers and petty merchants, but now were established and ran banks, mills, heavy industry, shipyards, and shipping companies. Moreover, even while maintaining their own cultural identity they did not fail to recognize themselves as nationally Indian, as Dadabhai Naoroji, the first Asian to occupy a seat in the British Parliament would note: "Whether I am a Hindu, a Mohammedan, a Parsi, a Christian, or of any other creed, I am above all an Indian. Our country is India; our nationality is Indian".

#### Religious practices :

The main components of Zoroastrianism as practiced by the Parsi community are the concepts of purity and pollution (nasu), initiation (navjot), daily prayers, worship at Fire Temples, marriage, funerals, and general worship.

#### Purity and pollution :

The balance between good and evil is correlated to the idea of purity and pollution. Purity is held to be of the very essence of godliness. Pollution's very point is to destroy purity through the death of a human. In order to adhere to purity it is the duty of Parsis to continue to

preserve purity within their body as God created them. A Zoroastrian priest spends his entire life dedicated to following a holy life.

### Navjote :

Zoroastrians are not initiated by infant baptism. A child is initiated into the faith when he or she is old enough to enter into the faith as the child requires to recite some prayers along with the priest at the time of Navjote ceremony ideally before they hit puberty. Though there is no actual age before which a child must be initiated into the faith (preferably after 7 years), Navjote cannot be performed on an adult.

The initiation begins with a ritual bath, then a spiritual cleansing prayer; the child changes into white pajama pants, a shawl, and a small cap. Following introductory prayers, the child is given the sacred items that are associated with Zoroastrianism: a sacred shirt and cord, sudre, and kusti. The child then faces the main priest and fire is brought in to represent God. Once the priest finishes with the prayers, the child's initiation is complete and he or she is now a part of the community and religion.

### Marriage :



**Parsi wedding 1905**

Marriage is very important to the members of the Parsi community, believing that, in order to continue the expansion of God's kingdom, they must procreate. Up until the mid-19th century child marriages were common even though the idea of child marriage was not part of the religious doctrine. Consequently, when social reform started happening in India, the Parsi community discontinued the practice. There are, however, rising problems over the availability of brides. More and more women in the Parsi community are becoming well educated and are therefore either delaying marriage or not partaking at all. Women within the Parsi community in India are ninety-seven percent literate; forty-two percent have completed high school or college and twenty-nine percent have an occupation in which they earn a substantial amount of money. The wedding ceremony begins much like the initiation with a cleansing bath. The bride and groom then travel to the wedding in florally decorated cars. The priests from both families facilitate the wedding. The couple begins by facing one another with a sheet to block their view of one another. Wool is passed over the two seven times to bind them together. The two are then supposed to throw rice to their partner symbolizing dominance. The religious element comes in next when the two sit side by side to face the priest.



## Funerals :



**Parsi Tower of Silence, Bombay**

The pollution that is associated with death has to be handled carefully. A separate part of the home is designated to house the corpse for funeral proceedings before being taken away. The priest comes to say prayers that are for the cleansing of sins and to affirm the faith of the deceased. Fire is brought to the room and prayers are begun. The body is washed and inserted clean within a sudre and kusti. The ceremony then begins, and a circle is drawn around the body into which only the bearers may enter. As they proceed to the cemetery they walk in pairs and are connected by white fabric. A dog is essential in the funeral process because it is able to see death. The body is taken to the tower of death where the vultures feed on it. Once the bones are bleached by the sun they are pushed into the circular opening in the center. The mourning process is four days long, and rather than creating graves for the dead, charities are established in honor of the person.

## Temples :



**Parsi Fire Temple of Ahmedabad, India**

Zoroastrian festivals were originally held outside in the open air; temples were not common until later. Most of the temples were built by wealthy Parsis who needed centers that housed purity. As stated before, fire is considered to represent the presence of Ahura Mazda, and there are two distinct differences for the types of fire for the different temples. The first type of temple is the Atash Behram, which is the highest level of fire. The fire is prepared for an entire year before it can be installed, and once it is, it is cared for to the highest possible degree.

There are only eight such temples located within India. The second type of fire temple is called a Dar-i Mihr, and the preparation process is not as intense. There are about 160 of these located throughout India.

Factions within the community :



**Parsi *Jashan* ceremony (in this case, a house blessing)**

Calendrical differences :

*This section contains information specific to the Parsi calendar. For information on the calendar used by the Zoroastrians for religious purposes, including details on its history and its variations, see Zoroastrian calendar.*

Until about the 12th century, all Zoroastrians followed the same 365-day religious calendar, which had remained largely unmodified since the calendar reforms of Ardashir I (r. 226-241 AD). Since that calendar did not compensate for the fractional days that go to make up a full solar year, with time it was no longer accordant with the seasons.

Sometime between 1125 and 1250 (cf. Boyce 1970, p. 537), the Parsis inserted an embolismic month to level out the accumulating fractional days. However, the Parsis were the only Zoroastrians to do so (and did it only once), with the result that, from then on, the calendar in use by the Parsis and the calendar in use by Zoroastrians elsewhere diverged by a matter of thirty days. The calendars still had the same name, *Shahenshahi* (imperial), presumably because none were aware that the calendars were no longer the same.

In 1745 the Parsis in and around Surat switched to the *Kadmi* or *Kadimi* calendar on the recommendation of their priests who were convinced that the calendar in use in the ancient homeland must be correct. Moreover, they denigrated the *Shahenshahi* calendar as being "royalist".

In 1906 attempts to bring the two factions together resulted in the introduction of a third calendar based on an 11th-century Seljuk model: the *Fasili*, or *Fasli*, calendar had leap days

intercalated every four years and it had a New Year's day that fell on the day of the vernal equinox. Although it was the only calendar always in harmony with the seasons, most members of the Parsi community rejected it on the grounds that it was not in accord with the injunctions expressed in Zoroastrian tradition (*Dēnkard* 3.419).

Today the majority of Parsis are adherents of the Parsi version of the *Shahenshahi* calendar although the *Kadmi* calendar does have its adherents among the Parsi communities of Surat and Bharuch. The *Fasli* calendar does not have a significant following among Parsis, but, by virtue of being compatible with the *Bastani* calendar (an Iranian development with the same salient features as the *Fasli* calendar), it is predominant among the Zoroastrians of Iran.

#### Effect of the calendar disputes :

Since some of the Avesta prayers contain references to the names of the months, and some other prayers are used only at specific times of the year, the issue of which calendar is "correct" also has theological ramifications.

To further complicate matters, in the late 18th century (or early 19th century) a highly influential head-priest and staunch proponent of the *Kadmi* calendar, Phiroze Kaus Dastur of the Dadyseth Atash-Behram in Bombay, became convinced that the pronunciation of prayers as recited by visitors from Iran was correct, while the pronunciation as used by the Parsis was not. He accordingly went on to alter some (but not all) of the prayers, which in due course came to be accepted by all adherents of the *Kadmi* calendar as the more ancient (and thus presumably correct). However, scholars of Avestan language and linguistics attribute the difference in pronunciation to a vowel-shift that occurred only in Iran and that the Iranian pronunciation as adopted by the *Kadmis* is actually more recent than the pronunciation used by the non-*Kadmi* Parsis.

The calendar disputes were not always purely academic, either. In the 1780s, emotions over the controversy ran so high that violence occasionally erupted. In 1783 a *Shahenshahi* resident of Bharuch named Homaji Jamshedji was sentenced to death for kicking a young *Kadmi* woman and so causing her to miscarry.

Of the eight Atash-Behrams (the highest grade of fire temple) in India, three follow the *Kadmi* pronunciation and calendar, the other five are *Shahenshahi*. The *Fassalis* do not have their own Atash-Behram.

#### Ilm-e-Kshnoom :

The *Ilm-e-Kshnoom* ('science of ecstasy', or 'science of bliss') is a school of Parsi-Zoroastrian philosophy based on a mystic and esoteric, rather than literal, interpretation of religious texts. According to adherents of the sect, they are followers of the Zoroastrian faith as preserved by a clan of 2000 individuals called the *Saheb-e-Dilan* ('Masters of the Heart') who are said to live in complete isolation in the mountainous recesses of the Caucasus (alternatively, in the Alborz range, around Mount Damavand).

There are few obvious indications that a Parsi might be a follower of the Kshnoom. Although their *Kusti* prayers are very similar to those used by the *Fassalis*, like the rest of the Parsi

community the followers of Kshnoom are divided with respect to which calendar they observe. There are also other minor differences in their recitation of the liturgy, such as repetition of some sections of the longer prayers. Nonetheless, the Kshnoom are extremely conservative in their ideology and prefer isolation even with respect to other Parsis.

The largest community of followers of the Kshnoom lives in Jogeshwari, a suburb of Bombay, where they have their own fire temple (Behramshah Nowroji Shroff Daremeher), their own housing colony (Behram Baug) and their own newspaper (*Parsi Pukar*). There is a smaller concentration of adherents in Surat, where the sect was founded in the last decades of the 19th century.

#### Issues relating to the deceased :



#### **Parsi funerary monument, St Mary's Cemetery, Wandsworth**

It has been traditional, in Mumbai and Karachi at least, for dead Parsis to be taken to the Towers of Silence where the corpses are quickly eaten by the city's vultures. The reason given for this practice is that earth, fire, and water are considered sacred elements which should not be defiled by the dead. Therefore, burial and cremation have always been prohibited in Parsi culture. However, in modern day Mumbai and Karachi the population of vultures has drastically reduced due to extensive urbanization and the unintended consequence of treating humans and livestock with antibiotics, and the anti-inflammatory diclofenac, both of which harm vultures. This issue led to the Indian vulture crisis, which led to the ban of the drug diclofenac. As a result, the bodies of the deceased are taking much longer to decompose. Solar panels have been installed in the Towers of Silence to speed up the decomposition process, but this has been only partially successful especially during monsoons. In Peshawar a Parsi graveyard was established in the late 19th century, which still exists; this cemetery is unique as there is no Tower of Silence. Nevertheless, the majority of Parsis still use the traditional method of disposing of their loved ones and consider this as the last act of charity by the deceased on earth.

The Tower of Silence in Mumbai is located at Malabar Hill. In Karachi, the Tower of Silence is located in Parsi Colony, near the Chanesar Goth and Mehmoodabad localities.

## Archaeogenetics :

The genetic studies of Parsis of Pakistan show sharp contrast between genetic data obtained from mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) and Y-chromosome DNA (Y-DNA), different from most populations. Historical records suggests that they had moved from Iran to Gujarat, India and then to Mumbai and Karachi, Pakistan. According to Y-DNA, they resemble the Iranian population, which supports historical records. When the mtDNA pool is compared to Iranians and Gujaratis (their putative parental populations), it contrasted Y-DNA data. About 60% of their maternal gene pool originates from South Asian haplogroups, which is just 7% in Iranians. Parsis have a high frequency of haplogroup M (55%), similar to Indians, which is just 1.7% in combined Iranian sample. The studies suggest sharp contrast between the maternal and paternal component of Parsis. Due to high diversity in Y-DNA and mtDNA lineages, the strong drift effect is unlikely even though they had a small population. The studies suggest a male-mediated migration of Parsi ancestors from Iran to Gujarat where they admixed with the local female population during initial settlements, which ultimately resulted in loss of Iranian mtDNA.

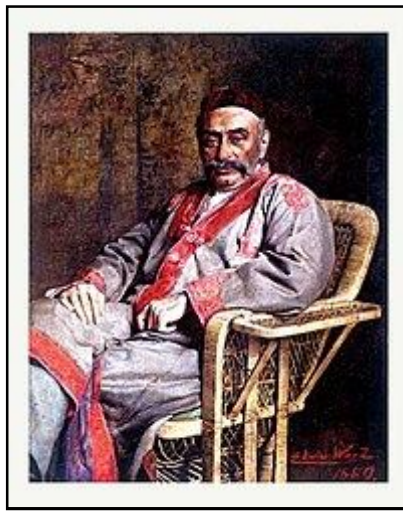
A study published in *Genome Biology* based on high density SNP data has shown that the Parsis are genetically closer to Iranian and Caucasus populations than to their South Asian neighbours. They also share the highest number of haplotypes with present-day Iranians; the admixture of the Parsis with Indian populations was estimated have occurred approximately 1,200 years ago. It is also found that Parsis are genetically closer to Neolithic Iranians than to modern Iranians who had recently received the genes from the Near East.

Parsis have been shown to have unusually high rates of breast cancer bladder cancer, glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase deficiency and Parkinson's disease.

## Prominent Parsis :



**Freddie Mercury, lead singer of Queen**



### **Jamsetji Tata, founder of Tata Group of companies**

The Parsis have made considerable contributions to the history and development of India, all the more remarkable considering their small numbers. As the maxim "Parsi, thy name is charity" alludes to, their most prominent contribution is their philanthropy.

Although their people's name Parsi comes from the Persian-language word for a Persian person, in Sanskrit the term means "one who gives alms". Mahatma Gandhi would note in a much misquoted statement, "I am proud of my country, India, for having produced the splendid Zoroastrian stock, in numbers beneath contempt, but in charity and philanthropy perhaps unequalled and certainly unsurpassed." Several landmarks in Mumbai are named after Parsis, including Nariman Point. The Malabar Hill in Mumbai, is a home to several prominent Parsis. Parsis prominent in the Indian independence movement include Pherozeshah Mehta, Dadabhai Naoroji, and Bhikaiji Cama.

Particularly notable Parsis in the fields of science and industry include physicist Homi J. Bhabha, Homi N. Sethna, J. R. D. Tata and Jamsetji Tata, regarded as the "Father of Indian Industry". Karachi-based businessman Byram Dinshawji Avari is the founder of Avari Group of companies, and is a twice Asian Games gold medalist. The families Godrej, Tata, Petit, Cowasjee and Wadia are important industrial Parsi families.

Other Parsi businessmen are Ratanji Dadabhoy Tata, J. R. D. Tata, Dinshaw Maneckji Petit, Ness Wadia, Neville Wadia, Jehangir Wadia and Nusli Wadia—all of them related through marriage to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan. Mohammad Ali Jinnah's wife Rattanbai Petit, was born into two of the Parsi Petit–Tata families, and their daughter Dina Jinnah was married to Parsi industrialist Neville Wadia, the scion of the Wadia family. The husband of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and son-in-law of Jawaharlal Nehru, Feroze Gandhi, was a Parsi with ancestral roots in Bharuch.

The Parsi community has given India several distinguished military officers. Field Marshal Sam Hormusji Framji Jamshedji Manekshaw, Military Cross, the architect of India's victory in the 1971 war, was the first officer of the Indian Army to be appointed a Field Marshal. Admiral Jal Cursetji was the first Parsi to be appointed Chief of the Naval Staff of the Indian Navy. Air Marshal Aspy Engineer served as India's second Chief of Air Staff, post-independence, and Air Chief Marshal. Fali Homi Major served as the 18th Chief of Air Staff. Vice Admiral RF Contractor



served as the 17th Chief of the Indian Coast Guard. Lieutenant Colonel Ardeshir Burjorji Tarapore was killed in action in the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war and was posthumously awarded the Param Vir Chakra, India's highest military award for gallantry in action. Lieutenant General FN Bilimoria was a senior officer of the Indian Army and the father of Lord Karan Bilimoria, founder of the Cobra Beer company.

Particularly notable Parsis in other areas of achievement include cricketers Farokh Engineer and Polly Umrigar, rock star Freddie Mercury, composer Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji and conductor Zubin Mehta; cultural studies theorist Homi K. Bhabha; screenwriter and photographer Sooni Taraporevala; authors Rohinton Mistry, Firdaus Kanga, Bapsi Sidhwa, Ardashir Vakil and Pakistani investigative journalist Ardeshir Cowasjee; actor Boman Irani; educator Jamshed Bharucha, India's first woman photo-journalist Homai Vyarawalla; Actresses Nina Wadia, Sanaya Irani and Persis Khambatta are Parsi who appear primarily in Bollywood films and television serials. Naxalite leader and intellectual Kobad Ghandy is a Parsi. Dorab Patel was Pakistan's first Parsi Supreme Court Justice. Fali S Nariman is a constitutional expert and noted jurist. Rattana Pestonji was a Parsi living in Thailand who helped develop Thai cinema. Firdaus Kharas is a Parsi humanitarian and activist who has helped pioneer the use of animation in social entrepreneurship. Another famous Parsi is the Indian-born American actor Erick Avari, best known for his roles in science-fiction films and television.

Source :

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parsis>